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# भारतीय लोक प्रशासन संस्थान

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August 3, 1989

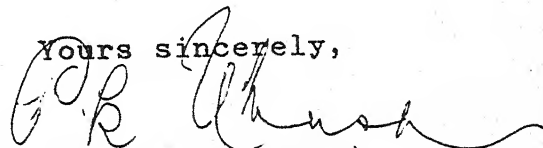
Dear Shri Diesh,

I have much pleasure in forwarding the final Report on 'Organizational Structure and Personnel Policy' of the Department of Posts.

I am indeed happy that this Report covers significant aspects of organizational and personnel problems of the Department of Posts. We hope, that the recommendations contained in this Report would be found useful by the 'Expert Committee on Excellence in Postal Services' for streamlining the postal operations in India.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,

  
(P.K. Umashankar)

Shri K. Diesh  
Member-Secretary  
Expert Committee on Excellence in  
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**Organisational Structure  
and  
Personnel Policies  
of  
Department of Posts**

**Report submitted to the Expert Committee  
on Excellence in Postal Services**

**Prof. O.P.Minocha  
Dr. R.K. Tiwari  
Dr. M. K. Narain  
Miss Sujata Singh**

**Volume I  
\*Main Report**

**Indian Institute of Public Administration  
Indraprastha Estate, Ring Road  
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## **PREFACE**

### **Introduction**

The Department of Posts is one of the oldest and the biggest service departments of the Government of India. It plays a vital role in the socio-economic life of the country. Owing to the increasing demand on the postal services, as also changes in the communication technology, the Government of India has been considering the need to bring necessary administrative reforms so as to improve the performance of postal services. The Fourth Pay Commission (June 1986) in its Report felt that, "there is a need for proper planning and management of manpower to keep pace with the challenge of modern times and requirements". It was recommended that the postal services and personnel management may be reviewed by a committee, to be specially set up for the purpose, so that it may be possible to achieve postal excellence and give satisfaction to those employed in the Department. Consequently, it was decided to set up an Expert Committee, to recommend measures to achieve excellence in postal service, under the Chairmanship of Shri S.B. Lall, I.A.S., (Retired), Formerly, Secretary (Coordination), Cabinet Secretariat. Besides other aspects the Expert Committee was asked to review and suggest changes in personnel policies of the Department for improving employees' satisfaction and productivity and to bring in more effective business-like work culture. Another important term of reference was to review the organizational structure of the Department and make suitable recommendations keeping in view the need for public accountability and efficiency.

### **Terms of Reference**

At the instance of the Expert Committee two of the crucial terms of reference relating to Organizational Structure and Personnel Policies in the Department of Posts was entrusted to the Indian Institute of Public Administration. The Institute was asked to study the following aspects:

### **ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

1. To examine the profile of postal operations, characteristics, size, and range.
2. Review the present organizational structure including Hq. and regional set up, examining its growth and present status.
  - A. Decision making at various levels-Delegation
  - B. Scope for innovative management and operating feasibility at various levels.
  - C. Span of control.
3. Examine external influence on operations and decision making i.e. relationship with other Ministries and Departments.
4. In the light of the above, to suggest how the organisation structure needs to be improved to make the postal department run efficiently - suggest various alternatives to the present organizational structure.



## PERSONNEL POLICY

1. Examine the overall pattern of postal employment and employees coverings:
  - A. Recruitment system
  - B. Training
  - C. Placement/transfer policies
  - D. Scope for development and growth.
  - E. Discipline and grievance handling
2. Study labour - management relation and role of Employees Union.
3. Identify factors effecting productivity of employees.
4. In the light of above suggest criteria for improving productivity and employees' job satisfaction.
5. Recommend changes in personnel policy to satisfy criterion so evolved.

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The consultancy assignment was taken by a team of four faculty members of the Indian Institute of Public Administration, namely, Prof. O.P. Minocha, Dr. R.K. Tiwari, Dr. M.K. Narain and Miss Sujata Singh.

Some of the aspects mentioned above had been examined earlier by a number of Committees and Commissions. The most important being the Estimates Committee and the Administrative Reforms Commission. The Estimates Committee in its 110th Report (1961) dealt with the Functions and Organisation, Powers of the Board, Organization of the Directorates, Planning, Finance and Staff matters. Similarly, the Administrative Reforms Commission in its Report of the Working Group on Posts and Telegraphs (1969) dealt with the structure of the Department of Post; its Board and Directorate. The Working Group also examined the functions and limitations of the Board, Separation of Posts and Telegraphs and Finance & Accounting. The Government had also set up a number of internal committees for the purposes of examining the specific areas of the functions of the Department of Posts. It is for the first time that a high power Expert Committee has been set up to go into nearly all aspects of postal services.

## METHODOLOGY

The Team had depended on the available limited published material on the subject as also on the background material which it collected from the Department. The Team also analysed the papers which were presented to the Expert Committee on Excellence in Postal Services. The findings of the survey of public opinion and the survey conducted for the consumers and for the postal employees were also utilised. The Members of the Consultancy Team attended the seminar organized by the Postal Staff College on the subject, "Personnel Policies and Organizational Structure of the Department of Posts". The Consultancy Team also visited the training centres at Saharanpur, Baroda and Dharbanga.

Some Members of Team also visit other places like Gurgaon, Aligarh, Kanpur, Calcutta, Ahmedabad for interaction with postal officials including the Postmaster General, Divisional Officers, Head Post Officers, Sub Post Officers and Branch Post Officers. They also had detailed discussions with some of the union representatives of the postal employees.

The observations and suggestions made in the following chapters are basically based on the published material already available on the subject and the discussions with the concerned officials and employees of the Department of Posts on the basis of structured schedules and questionnaires.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The Consultancy Team is grateful to Shri S.B. Lall, Chairman and Mr. K. Diesh, Member-Secretary, Expert Committee for the facilities and cooperation extended by them for the successful completion of the study. The Team also acknowledges with gratitude for the critical and constructive observations made by various Members of the Expert Committee. The Team is highly thankful to Chairman and Members of the Board and other officials of the Department and representatives of the unions for sparing their valuable time for discussion. The Team is greatful to Shri Ajay Bagchi, till recently Member (Development), Postal Board for detailed discussions on the organizational problems. The Team is thankful to Shri R.K. Singh, Director (Mail Planning Operations) Delhi, for detailed discussions on the issues relating to the Railway Mail Service. The Team is particular thankful to Mr. Shiv Nath, Member, (reted.), Postal Services Board for his detailed analytical analysis of the personnel policies and to Shri Subhash Gakkar for his valuable suggestions. The Team also places on record thanks to Serva Shri K.L. Moza, K. Ramamurthy, B.B. Surve and the Officials of the three federations for sparing time and for giving constructive suggestions to bring excellence in postal services.

The Team is extremely grateful to Shri P.K. Umashankar, Director, Indian Institute of Public Administration, for giving encouragement and support for completing this study.

## CHAPTER - 1

### PROFILE OF POSTAL OPERATIONS

The history of postal services in India is a fascinating saga of continued progress, growth and diversification. The postal services, though of some rudimentary form, existed in the ancient and mediaeval India. That system was meant primarily for official purposes. However, a limited private correspondence was also being carried for the purpose of commerce and trade. Most of the postal system were organised purely on local basis and did not cover the whole country.

The country wide system in an organised form came in to existence only in 1688 when the first post office was established at Bombay by the East India Company. The Department of Posts was set up in 1854 and a Director General was appointed as incharge of the Department. The regional administration of the postal services were under the control of Post Master General. In 1898, the Indian Post Office Act was enacted which provided the legislative base to the Department and to the postal services. The Act is being amended. The Bill to amend the Act, introduced in 1986, is still pending for the assent of the President of India.

In most of the Indian States, postal system in some form has also been functioning. After Independence, numerous State postal systems were incorporated in Indian Postal System. Apart from this during the post-Independence period there has been a phenomenal increase in the coverage, activities, income and employment in the postal operations in India. The Table 1.1 indicates comparatively the magnitude of the postal operation as it existed during the years 1948-49 and 1986-87.

The Table clearly demonstrates the massive expansion of postal network in the country. During the period 1.4.1949 to 31.3.1987, the number of post offices have increased by nearly seven times. Most of the new post offices have been set up in the rural areas. The percentage of distribution of the post offices in the rural and urban areas works out to be 88.87% and 11.16% respectively. At present there is one post office for a population of about 5,391 persons. The average of mail per person comes to sixteen. However, the number of villages in the country without post offices is three times the number of villages having post offices. The Seventh Five Year Plan envisages opening of post offices in about 6,000 villages. Similarly, the number of mail articles handled by the Department has increased nearly six folds during the period under review. The growth of mail has been between 4 and 5 per cent. At this rate by the turn of the century it is likely to be more than double the present volume of mail.

TABLE 1.1

## MAGNITUDE OF POSTAL OPERATIONS SINCE INDEPENDENCE

	1948-49	1986-87
1. Total number of Post Offices	20,517	Rural 1,27,930 Urban 16,057 ----- Total 1,43,987
2. Number of Mail articles handled (in million)	2,263	12,633
3. Number of Money Orders issued (in million)	44.9	120.50
4. Value of Money Orders issued (in Rs. million)	1,500	21,890
5. Number of Saving Bank Accounts	3.4	77.5
6. Income (in Rs. million)	166.9	5,575.0
7. Expenditure (in Rs. million)	182.7	7,739.3
8. Average area served by one post office (sq. km.)	52.00 miles	22.83 (sq. km.)
9. Average population served by one post office	14,835	5,391
10. Number of employees (including Extra Departmental Agents)	Not Available	5,88,379

Apart from the mail, the post offices deal with large number of other activities like money orders, savings bank accounts and postal life insurance. Since Independence, the number of savings bank account have increased by more than 22 times. There were about 775 million depositors with a total investment of Rs.33,302 million on 31.3.1987. There has been nearly three times increase in the number of money orders and about fifteen times in the value of money orders. The post offices are handling postal orders worth Rs.224.20 million. The postal services in India deal with 1,281,425 policy holders with Rs.3,689 million in the postal life insurance fund.

The revenue generated by the postal operations which was Rs.1,669 million in 1948-49 has increased to Rs.5,575 million; an increase of more than 33 times. During the last 42 years, the postal operations in India has shown profit only on a few occasions. Infact, for the last 25 years, the Department of Posts is working at a heavy deficits. The data on postal revenue and working expenses for the last 5 years is given below:

TABLE -1.2

TABLE SHOWING FINANCIAL POSITION (1983-88)			
	Revenue	Working expenses Deficit (-)	
Year	Actuals (Rs. crore)	Actual (Rs. crore)	Actual (Rs. crore)
1	2	3	4
1983-84	434.54	507.77 (-)	(-) 73.23
1984-85	444.41	568.66 (-)	(-) 124.25
1985-86	476.84	640.39 (-)	(-) 163.55
1986-87	557.50	773.93 (-)	(-) 216.43
1987-88	642.98	833.85 (-)	(-) 190.87

Source: Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the year ending 31st March 1988, No.4 of 1989, Union Government (Post and Telecommunications), pp.2-3

The above Table indicates an increasing trend of losses in running the Department of Post; which increased from Rs.73.23 crores in 1983-84 to Rs.190.87 crores in 1987-88. Most of the postal services have been subsidised. The Table 1.3 given below indicates the loss incurred by the Department during the year 1986-87 on various services provided by it.

Another important feature of the Indian Postal Department is the extensive use of the Extra Departmental (ED) agency system. It was observed by the Committee on Enquiry on Extra Departmental System (1986), that firstly, there is no comparable organised activity of part-time nature in any other Central Government Department. Secondly, compared to foreign countries the number of ED post offices is very large. It was however observed that countries like Australia, Brazil, Canada and U.S.A. have post offices and letter boxes less than half the number of India. China, with population of nearly 50% higher than India, has only about 1/3rd of the number of post offices and 1/4th of letter boxes than those in India. The Table 1.4 below gives the comparable figures of some important countries.

TABLE - 1.3

TABLE SHOWING ITEM WISE LOSS IN POSTAL OPERATIONS DURING 1986-87

	Cost (Average) (In paise)	Tariff (Average) (In paise)	Loss per Article (In paise)	Total loss (Rs.in crore)
1	2	3	4	5
Post Cards	65.17	18.10	47.07	46.92
Letter Cards	70.63	35.00	35.63	34.70
<u>Regd. Newspapers</u>				
Single	7.81	10.28	67.53	16.30
Double	95.25	26.73	68.52	02.48
<u>Book Post</u>				
Book Patterns & Sample Pktds.	82.54	44.08	38.46	11.01
Printed Books	99.84	29.63	70.21	03.69
Other	108.75	50.11	58.64	1.50
Periodicals Parcels	664.05	573.38	90.69	50.89
Registration	466.77	275.00	191.77	55.06
Recorded Delivery	230.15	800.00	130.15	01.15
Insurance	569.70)	526.50	101.38	01.00
+ 57.18)				
Value Payable	319.69	127.04	192.65	02.31
Acknowledge-	50.18	9.00	28.10	01.95
Money Orders	523.85	373.94	208.09	27.82
+ 58.18				
Tel. Money	582.53	284.62	297.91	00.83
Orders				
I.P. OS,	292.63	41.17	251.46	50.73

Source: Parliamentary Debates (Rajya Sabha), Vol. CXL, No.23, 1986, Rajya Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi December 4, 1986.

TABLE - 1.4

TABLE SHOWING POSTAL OPERATIONS IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES

Country	Area (Sq. Kms) (In Millions)	Population	No. of Post Office	No. of letter boxes
Angola	1.25	7.08	133	147
Argentina	3.76	27.86	554	11278
Algeria	2.38	21.65	1826	3765
Australia	7.69	14.07	4790	14965
Brazil	8.51	129.66	7422	605
Canada	9.50	25.10	8295*	45000
China	9.60	1024.95	48745	164514
India	3.29	685.18	142296	497475
Indonesia	1.92	157.23	129788	15557
Iran	1.65	42.07	3624	16300
Nigeria	1.26	6.00	159	91
U.S.A.	9.20	226.55	39445	260000

Source: Ministry of Communications, Department of Posts, Report of the Committee of Enquiry on Extra Departmental System, 1986, p.97.

The postal services are labour intensive with the cost of establishment alone accounting for 82% to 90% of the Department's expenditure. The Postal Department is an extra-ordinarily large organisation. It has a work force of 2.92 lakhs of departmental employees and 2.97 lakhs extra departmental employees.

Of late, there has also been an emergence of private organisations providing services for collection, transmission, and delivery; often violating the provisions of Indian Post Office Act, 1898. A large number of nationalised banks including Reserve Bank of India, public sector enterprises, business houses are using the services of these courier agencies for transmitting mails. These private courier agencies are not only infringing the monopoly of the Department but also causing substantial loss of revenue to the Department.

The magnitude of the postal operations and its impact on the overall socio-economic development and national integration warrants innovations and changes to make it more effective. Since independence, few innovations in the postal services and their management had been introduced. To mention few of them are, the introduction of night air-mail service in 1949, postal index number in 1972, the quick mail service in 1975 and the speed post in

1986. Despite all these changes, the survey conducted by the Expert Committee has indicated a number of weaknesses in the area of organizational structure and personnel management. There is a feeling among the different sections of the users of postal services that the quality of service offered by the Indian postal System has deteriorated over the years. It has been pointed out that the Department should bring techno-managerial changes to provide consumer's satisfaction and assured them efficient services, even on enhanced rates. The respondents have also indicated that the existing headquarters' structure should be made to work more effectively. In view of the socio-economic development urbanization, spread of education and the likely techno-managerial changes, postal operations in India will be called upon to play a greater role than what it had played in the recent past. The increasing activities in different aspects of postal services indicate that the postal operations are no longer only social or public utility services, most of its operations are commercial in nature. There is competition not only with public organisations like nationalised banks and insurance companies, but also with the private organisations. It is being strongly advocated that in the next few years the postal operations should not only expand its activities but should become a commercial viable and financial self-sufficient organisation. It is being expected that by the year 2,000 the Indian postal operations should aim at achieving the following objectives: •

1. Provide and maintain efficient, reliable and economic service;
2. Attain within a span of ten years surplus funds to finance development;
3. Produce within a period of five years financial self-sufficiency in its operation;
4. Ensure the availability of its basic postal services in all parts of the country including tribal, remote and hilly areas; and
5. Provide an efficient national link in the international mail communication network.

To achieve all these objectives it is essential to design an organisational structure which may ensure 'operational autonomy' within the broad framework of 'public accountability'. The structural aspects which have been dealt specifically; are how activities are grouped together. For this point of view, the analysis has been made of the activities which are carried out by different functionaries and in the different wings of the organization. The two major points covered are: (i) the extent to which the activities are grouped logically together; and (ii) whether or not there is any unnecessary duplication of activities. The analysis also deal with problems of coordination, communication, span of control and decision-making and to enable those responsible for the functions or group of activities to have adequate control of all the resources they require for effective functioning of the postal services.



## CHAPTER - 2

### ORGANISATION STRUCTURE AT HEADQUARTERS

The word organisation in relation to the postal operations has two connotations. The first signifies the type of an institution and its legal status. The second refers to the processes and allocation of work among various officials of the organisation so that the declared objectives of the Department can be effectively achieved.

Taking cognizance of postal operations and the projected objectives in the years to come the Department of Posts would require a balance between stability and change. Stability is required to move coherently towards the declared objectives on the basis of given strength of Department. But it is also essential to alter the nature and structure of the organisation in the light of the changing objectives, environment, technology, aspirations and expectations of the users of postal services as well as officials of the organisation. There is no one best way of designing an organisation. The most desirable structure may vary from one organization to another and even in one organisation over a period.

The nature and structure of the organisation at the top level (Headquarters) plays an important role in setting goals, formulating policies, making rules, planning for diversification, modernization, monitoring and evaluation. The legal status of the organisation, its role and type of directions it gives to the field organizations, will contribute to bring excellence in postal services.

#### Position in the Past

For efficient functioning of the postal services even during pre-Independence period it was well recognised that the Department must be given sufficient authority instead of having to look up to the Secretariat in minor as well as major matters. In his despatch to the Government of India, the Secretary of State, in February 1928, stated, "endeavours should be made to organise the Directorate of Indian Posts and Telegraphs more or less on the lines of Railway Board".

Instead of creating a formal Post and Telegraph Board on the lines of Railway Board, a nominal Board as a purely informal arrangement with a limited powers came into existence in 1928. Under such an arrangement, it was envisaged that the Director General, the Chief Engineer, Senior Deputy Director General and the Finance Officer can meet and discuss among themselves and dispose of all matters which would otherwise have to be referred to the administrative Department or to Finance Department for the purpose of having sanctions of the Government. However, in actual practice a large number of items

were excluded from the purview of the then existing Board. The informal Board was considered to be a shadow without a substance. The informal Board was formalised in 1939. But the Board continued to meet occasionally and the administrative Ministry continued to exercise direct control over all important decisions and operational aspects. The Director General could take decisions only on minor matters pertaining to day-to-day administration.

The position did change substantially after Independence. The Director General's decisions and proposals are subjected to usual scrutiny at lower levels in secretariat before being submitted to the Secretary and Ministers for their orders. With the expansion of postal services, it was felt that some modifications may be made in organisational set up of the Department. It was argued that if the programme of development was to proceed smoothly and the postal services were to function efficiently, the Director General should be given more freedom and relief from the restrictive control of the Ministry. In 1958 the then Minister of Transport and Communication, stated in Lok Sabha:

It is very difficult for a purely administrative machinery to function in a quick manner in a Department like this and it is therefore essential that some kind of Board should be set up at the Directorate level it may be, or it will have to be more or less on the Railway Board pattern.

To improve the efficiency of postal services, the powers of the Board and that of the Director General were increased. The Director General was made as ex-officio Chairman. The Board and the Director General between themselves were to exercise all the powers of the Ministry in all administrative and financial matters with the approval, where necessary, of the Minister in policy matters. However, the Board was not established on the pattern of the Railway Board.

The matter was also examined by the Estimates Committee in March, 1961 and echoed the same views as expressed earlier by the then Minister of Communication. In 1961 all the Members of the Board were accorded ex-officio status of Joint Secretary. However, in 1966, the status of three of the Members, each incharge of the Posts, Telecommunication and Finance, were raised to those of ex-officio Additional Secretary. Those positions were redesignated as Senior Members. Again in September 1968 Post and Telegraph Finance was technically integrated with the Board and the Senior Member (Finance) along with his assistants were made officers of the Board. However, the Senior Member (Finance) continued to be an Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Finance. The intention behind such an integration was that the Senior Member should function vis-a-vis P & T Board in the same manner as the Financial Commissioner in the Railway Board.

The constitution and functions of the Board underwent another change in February, 1974. The Secretary, Ministry of Communications was given the position of Director

General P & T and ex-officio Chairman of the P & T Board. The Senior Member (Finance) was given the status of Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Finance (Department of Expenditure). The other three Members were given the charge of telecommunication developments; postal development & agency functions; and administration. These Members were given the status of ex-officio Joint Secretary to Government in the Ministry. The Secretary to the Board was given the rank of Deputy Secretary to the Government of India.

### **The Present Position**

As a consequence of the bifurcation of the Ministry of Communications into two Departments, namely, Department of Posts and Department of Tele communications, a separate Postal Services Board was created in April, 1985. Continuing the earlier practice, the Secretary, Department of Posts was made the Chairman of the Board. The Board consists of four Members each dealing with operation, development, personnel and finance. These Members enjoy the status of Additional Secretary to the Government of India.

Member (Personnel) is incharge of matters relating to staff, establishment, training and the administration of Postal Services Board. Members (Operations) is incharge of all matters relating to postal operations including mail's and postal technical matters. He is also incharge of research and development and public relations. Member (Development) is incharge of all matters relating to postal planning, agency functions, postal plans, sports, welfare and staff relations.

### **Proceedings of the Board**

As per the office memorandum of Feb.1974 which is also applicable to the newly constituted Board, in 1985, the Chairman may from time to time appoint a Vice-Chairman from amongst the Senior Members, who in his absence, will preside at the meetings and exercise the powers of the Chairman. The Chairman or Vice- Chairman and two Members form a quorum, provided that where financial issues are involved, one of the two members must be the Member (Finance).

The decision of the majority of the Members is be the decision of the Board, a Member or Members having the right to record a separate note of dissent. When a recommendation is made to the Minister in pursuance of a decision of the Board, the views of the dissentient Member(s) is brought to his notice, if the Member(s) so desire(s). In the case of equality of votes, the Chairman has a casting vote. If the Chairman disagrees with the majority decision of the Board in any particular case, he may over rule his colleagues. Where he does so, the matter is brought to the notice of the Minister of Communications.

When the question before the Board involves a financial issue within the powers delegated to the Board and the Member(Finance) disagrees with any majority decision of

the Board, it is open for him to ask that the matter be placed before the Minister of Communications. In matters falling within the delegated field, it is open to the Minister of Communications to over rule the Member (Finance). In matters beyond the powers delegated to the Board, the Member (Finance) has a right of access to the Ministry of Finance and Finance Minister.

The decisions arrived at by the Board in exercise of the powers delegated to it are promulgated as orders emanating from the Board and are issued over the signatures of an officer authorised to authenticate orders issued in the name of the Board. Financial sanctions are issued in consultation with the Internal Finance Officer.

The Secretary to the Board maintains record of its proceedings, issues communication on behalf of the Board and generally perform such other duties as may be entrusted to him from time to time.

#### **CONDUCT OF BUSINESS OF THE BOARD**

All matters relating to the Department are ordinarily put up to the Board for decisions except where they fall within the powers delegated to lower authorities or where Members are specifically authorised to take decisions on behalf of the Board.

The business of the Board is conducted in accordance with the following procedure:-

- (i) The Board will ordinarily meet once a fortnight but it will be open to the Chairman to summon a meeting of the Board at any time should be consider it necessary.
- (ii) It will be open to any member of the Board to suggest that a particular case should be placed before the Board either for sanction or for discussion.
- (iii) In all cases which are referred to the Board, a self-contained memo. will be prepared by the Branch Officer concerned and the case will be sent to the Secretary of the Board for the purpose of circulating the case and supplying each Member with a copy of the memo. If the Secretary considers that the case is incomplete or requires a reference to any other Branch or Section, he will issue instructions accordingly and will ensure that the case is expeditiously completed and placed before the Board.
- (iv) Ordinarily no item will be included in the agenda of a meeting of the Board unless the file reaches the Secretary at least ten days before the meeting, but in special cases the Chairman may relax this limit. It will, however, be open to the Chairman to admit any subject for discussion in the Board even if it is not on the agenda.

- (v) The agenda for a meeting will be circulated as far as possible a week before the date of the meeting.
- (vi) The minutes of the meetings will be prepared by the Secretary who will circulate them to the Members of the Board for comments, if any. It will then be submitted to the Chairman for approval. On return, action will be taken in pursuance of the decisions recorded. The minutes will be formally confirmed at the next meeting of the Board. The Secretary will return the cases discussed at the Board to reach the concerned Branch Officer with a copy of the decision of the Board, duly certified under his signature.
- (vii) Subject to any general directions of the Board, urgent decisions may be taken by circulation of to the Members of the Board. The Board may also specify the categories of cases which may be disposed of on file with the concurrence of any two Members of the Board one of whom shall be the Member (Finance) in cases where any financial issues are involved. In such cases, it will be in order for the Member (Finance) to authorise his Deputy Directors General/Directors(Finance) to dispose of the cases on his behalf.
- (viii) A list of cases disposed of either by circulation to the Members of the Board or with the concurrence of any two Members of the Board will be placed before its next meeting for information and for any action which the Board may wish to take.
- (ix) The Secretary of the Board will maintain a register of cases discussed at the meeting of the Board and will enter opposite each case the decision or instructions of the Board as contained in its minutes.
- (x) The Board may make such minor changes in the procedure of business laid down above as and when may be found necessary, but no important change shall be made without the approval of the Minister of Communications.
- (xi) The Chairman will be competent to issue orders from time to time regarding the detailed distribution of functions between the Members of the Board, other than the Member (Finance). In the case of any important change in the duties of the respective Members, he shall obtain the approval of the Minister of Communications.

#### **Some Observations on the Status and the Role of Postal Services Board**

Despite a number of suggestions and efforts towards reorganisation of the Postal Services Board, the objective of achieving the status equivalent to that of Railway Board and

there by to have desired operational autonomy is still to be realised fully.

Some of the former Members of Board and officials of the Department have observed that the Board is a non-functional and it meets on rare occasions to transact its formal business. For example during the period 1985-86, 1986-87, 1987-88 and 1988- 89 (upto December, 1988), the Board had only seven, eight, seven and two meetings respectively.

The Board is working like a typical Government Department. Most of the important policy decisions are taken after examination, noting and consultation on the files. The concept of Board as a collectively decision making body for managing the affairs of the Department seems to have been largely defeated.

There is no formal devolution of powers to the individual Members. The practice, as reported, has been that a decision can be taken jointly by two Members. Even minor matters come before the Board. Since the Director General is having legally all the powers and is superior to the Members of the Board, he can over rule the decision taken by the Board. Therefore, in reality the Board is only a consulting Board and has no legal power.

At times consultation among the Members of the Board results into delay in decision-making. The matters which are brought to the Board are deferred for further scrutiny and detailed examination. It was hoped that each Member of the Board with specific functions and responsibilities would have a closer examination of matters in the relevant sphere before it is put before the Board.

The dual role of Member (Finance) as an Internal Financial Advisor to the Department and that of a representative of the Ministry of Finance in the Board has given rise to ambiguity.

During the discussion with Members of the Board it was pointed out that there is nothing wrong with present set up. The problem is that there is no will to make the system work. There is a need to have a system under which quick decisions are forthcoming. To this extent the Board in its present form has failed to deliver the goods.

The commercial aspects of the Department have not been realized. The Board is not being allowed to charge for its postal services and facilities. There are number of administrative restrictions which is telling upon the efficiency of the postal services. The activities of the Departments are being subjected to traditional control like any other Department designed to regulate the public expenditure. Such a situation is not conducive to undertake commercial ventures or approach organisational matters with greater initiative, drive and enterprise.

The Administrative Reforms Commission found that Board is not a homogeneous body. The Chairman, who is Secretary to the Department is having a higher rank than other Members. The Chairman normally is supposed to be first among the equals, "primus inter pares" in any organisation engaged in commercial activities. The Postal Services Board is functioning in a hierarchical manner and as not a team.

The position of the Chairman alongwith that of the Director General of Posts has been necessitated because of the legal and administrative requirements. Though the Chairman enjoys these two positions, it is not so with the Members of the Board. The Members of the Board are required to submit their proposal to the Director General for his approval. Therefore, one would be compelled to say that Members are functioning as Deputy Director General. Such a set-up can afford little scope for initiative and expeditious decisions in the functional areas to be managed by the Members.

Number of defects can also be mentioned regarding the procedure for conducting of business of the Board. The normal practice in any Board type of organisation is that before the matters are presented to the Board for its decisions, a considerable thought is given by the Members and its Secretariat and the memoranda, detailed notices, past practices, etc. are put up for the consideration of the Board. This practice seems to be not followed. This results into considerable delay owing to the queries raised by some of the Members of the Board.

Technically also, the functional problems which require the specific approval by the concerned Members are finally approval by the Ministry. Such a procedure is in sharp contrast to those prevailing in the Railway Board, where each Member has a full authority to deal with their specific issues.

It has come to light that the Postal Services Board after its independent existence has not notified the constitution and functions of the Board. The same, however, has already been done in respect of Telecom Board. The Postal Services Board is being managed as per the earlier constitution, notified in February, 1974.

### **Need for Change**

Considering the fact that the postal operations in India are no longer only a service or public utility activities; it is, and likely to be more in the years to come, a commercial venture. In these endeavours one is faced with a dilemma: how to devise an administrative structure which is subjected to government directions in important policy matters like any other public organisation; while at the same time, they have the freedom of action necessary to operate efficiently like a private organization. Basically, therefore, issues relating to



organizational set up is nothing but an administrative device to strike a right balance between 'public accountability' and 'operational autonomy'.

The Government of India had been indeed seized of this problem and wanted an administrative set up which can improve the efficiency of the postal services and expedite the disposal of business concerning them. Such an administrative system should have sufficient freedom from the restrictive controls - both administrative and financial-which have been devised for the strict regulation of public expenditure. The Department of Posts must have sufficient devolution of authority at all levels to encourage officials to take decisions and necessary freedom to display their initiative and drive in running a social-cum-commercial enterprise like the postal services.

### **Alternative Forms of Organization**

A number of forms of organization for the administration of organization like the postal services, each achieving a different balance between objectives of autonomy and control can be considered. These forms are 'Departmental Organizations', 'Statutory Corporations', 'Government Companies', 'Commission' and 'Statutory Boards', like the Railway Board. Unfortunately, so far well defined principles have not emerged either in theory or in practice regarding the choice of the forms of organization. However, there has been some consensus that statutory corporations may be set up for such organisations which requires large financial investment or deal in promotional and developmental activities. However, organizations dealing in industrial, manufacturing, processing and trading activities should be in the form of Government company. The departmental forms of organizations are more suited for the activities like defence having strategic or security orientation and enterprises designed for economic control or for public utility services. Even in the contemporary World there has been absence of raison detre regarding the forms of organization. The corporation forms have been used in England and some of the Commonwealth countries. On the other hand, the company form has been popular in the continent of Europe in general; France, Germany and Italy in particular.

### **Department**

Among the forms of organization, the departmental form is the oldest and is at per with normal government activities in matters relating to appropriation, parliamentary control and accountability. Such organizations are under direct executive control of the concerned ministres. Although this form of organization ensures full control, there are obvious limitations in this form of organization. The administration may not have adequate freedom of action in matters relating to technological improvement, capital expansion, finance and accounting, purchasing and personnel administration. Inadequacy of this form in India for running the commercial, social and developmental activities has led to the development of



other forms of organization. Those forms of organisation can provide required flexibility and initiative in the management of the enterprises.

### **Statutory Corporations**

Statutory corporations are set up under specific statutes of the legislatures, the type of their accountability and the nature of control is indicated in the statutes. Statutes also create a corporate body usually styled as a Board of Directors which has the power to do and act in the name of the corporation. Obviously, this form of organization has an advantage because of it having initiative, flexibility, and operational freedom. However, the creation of this device has given rise to the new and equally difficult problems. There is danger that their operations may become uncoordinated and they may become too much independent. The resultant problem is how far should the government keep control over corporations or how far should it go to grant autonomy. Excessive executive or parliamentary control is likely to take away the primary advantages of the autonomy and freedom.

### **Government Company**

Government company is the new form of organization which is being widely used in India for the industrial and commercial undertakings under the Indian Company's Act, 1956. A Company may be established by issuing an executive order or on a formal registration by a Memorandum and Articles of Association. The capital is held in the name of President of India or the Governor in a State. This form of organization can give freedom from ministerial and parliamentary interference in day-to-day affairs and guarantees sufficient degree of managerial independence so that their Boards may become efficient. This form of organization being partially amune from constitutional responsibility may create many problems. There is a danger that their operations may become uncoordinated and may become too much independent.

India has a limited experience of a Commission type of departmental organisations as in the case of Space, Electronics and more recently the Telecommunication. The Railway Board having a Statutory status is a unique type of organisation under a departmental form of organisation. In the former type of organisation most of powers of the Government including those in financial matters are with the Commission.

It is evident that undue stress is being given to the legal status of the organization. The idea that the requisite autonomy for an organization can be secured by an appropriate legal status has now proved illusory. There is indeed no discoverable correlation between the legal status of the organization and its autonomy and the quality of performance. Based on the Indian experience, the 'statutory corporation's and 'government companies' should be more efficient owing to the autonomy those organisations enjoy as compared to the

departmental form of organization. However, it is not true. The autonomy can create the problems of direct and indirect interference from different quarters in the appointment of personnel and in financial matters. The fact is that the autonomy an organization enjoys and the kind of control it has to work under depends mainly on the conventions and working precedents which grow along with legal status.

### **Suggested Organization**

The Estimates Committee in its 110th Report (second Lok Sabha 1961) suggested that consistent with the responsibilities and social obligations of the Department due recognition be given to the commercial character by confirming on the Postal Board powers similar to those enjoyed by the Railway Board or like a Statutory Corporation so that the Department may approach the problems of management with a greater sense of enterprise, drive and initiatives.

Similarly, the report of the Working Group on Posts and Telegraphs of the Administrative Reforms Commission (1969) pointed out that, the most suitable structure for the administration of Posts and Telegraphs services would be a fully autonomous high power Board forming part of the regular government machinery and functioning in the same manner as the Railway Board. It was also pointed out by the Working Group that such a Board should be vested with a fully authority of the Government of India in all matters both administrative and financial relating to the postal services within the framework of the government policies subject to consultation with the appropriate Ministries of the Government of India. It was suggested that each Member should be fully and directly responsible to the Minister for his area of specialisation. It was, therefore, felt that the Member should be given the rank and status of the Secretary to the Government of India as in the case of Railway Board.

In a Seminar on 'Personnel Policies and Organizational Structure' conducted by the Postal Staff College (September 8-9, 1988) a large number of participants felt the need for the upgradation of the present Board to a body similar to the Railway Board with full autonomy. The service Members should be the final authority in the areas under them. It was also suggested that the Board should have full powers to make its own decisions in administration and financial matters within the ambit of general government policy and should in principle be able to manage the affairs of the posts like a Board of Directors.

In a memorandum presented by the Postal Officers Association (India) to the Expert Committee on Excellence, it was pointed out that the Postal Services Board has no statutory powers like the Railway Board. Constitution of such a Board (Postal Services Board) without any power of management is not justified at all. It was felt that there is a need

for radical structural changes alongwith working procedures in the headquarters' office to streamline and to have better efficiency in the postal services.

In a memorandum submitted by the All India Association of Postal Inspectors and Assistant Superintendents of Posts to the Expert Committee on Postal Excellence, it was suggested that the administration at the central level must have an independent separate Postal Board with higher powers as in the case of Railways, with a separate budget.

As regards the international experience, there is no uniformity in regard to the status of the Board dealing with Postal Services. For example, in the United Kingdom, the postal activities are being managed through a statutory corporation. Same is the case in Japan and Canada. In Australia, the postal services are being managed through a Commission. A large number of developing countries run the postal services on departmental basis.

In India also the Department of Telecommunication, a sister organisation, has also been experimenting with different forms of organizations in managing the activities relating to telecommunication. In April, 1988, Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd., as a company form of organization, was set up for managing Delhi and Bombay telephones. Similarly, the overseas communication has also been converted into a wholly government owned public limited company registered under the Indian Company's Act, into a new organization called Videsh Sanchar Nigam Ltd. The Department of Telecommunication has already set up a high power Commission and have given sufficient administrative and financial powers to the Chairman of the Telecom Commission.

If one considers the need for legal and structural changes relating to the postal services one will be required to consider some of the following issues:

- a) Financial Resources;
- b) Personnel Management;
- c) Research and Development;
- d) Telenological upgradation; and
- e) Overall efficiency of postal services.

Examining the first issue it may not be possible to generate sufficient resources for postal services from the market either in the form of equity shares or bonds. Firstly, because the saving capacity of the public is limited. Secondly, a large number of public enterprises have already started number of schemes to augment their resources. Thirdly, the efficiency of the postal service may not motivate the public to invest money with the Department. Further the Department if it has to earn the profit it would be required to

generate its own resources which may compel the Board to enhance the charges for services; it have its own limitations. Therefore, changing the nature of the postal services to augment financial resources is neither possible nor desirable.

If the postal services are converted into an organization other than the Departmental form of organization there may be sufficient autonomy in personnel management. The functioning of some the existing "statutory corporations" and the "government companies" in the public enterprises indicates that such an organizational arrangement will lead to constant litigation as also frustration among all the employees. The autonomy may not lead to sufficient efficiency. Even in terms of the salary structure though the employees would not be tied down to the government departments but would be regulated by the Bureau of Public Enterprises. It may not be possible to attract competent persons in sufficient number which the Government can by virtue of security, better status and other such privileges government employee enjoys in a Government Department. Any change in the legal status of organisation may not be conducive to the employees. Even the so called autonomy is only a myth. At times it can lead to bureaucratic and political interference in personnel administration.

As far as research and technological development is concerned the Government by virtue of having adequate research facilities and highly developed Department of Science and Technology and Department of Electronics would be able to bringing about technological improvement in postal operations more effectively. A separate legal entity for the postal services may not be able to invest sufficiently in research, development and technological upgradation.

Ultimately, the postal services has to provide better services to the public. Taking into consideration the nature of activities, type of employees and their level of motivation and technological obsolescence the change in the legal status for the postal operations may not bring about the desired efficiency. Efficiency does not depend on legal status.

It is thus amply demonstrated that administration and procedural modifications are necessary within the existing framework so that we can achieve excellence in postal services.

### **The Postal Board**

The Board occupies the position of crucial importance in the direction and management of postal services. The excellence in postal services is indeed likely to depend on the composition and power of Board and the quality of its Members.

At this point we may examine whether a Board is necessary, particularly, taking into consideration that the Board had not functioned as expected. It is being, therefore, argued that a single executive should be made responsible for the entire functioning of the Department of Posts like any Secretary to the Government of India. Such a system of having a single administrator at the helms of affairs both for the policy formulation and policy implementation raises a number of problems. Combining functions of policy formulation and operational aspects may leave little time for innovation and dispassionate appraisal of the Department's working. At the same time it may not be possible to manage the gigantic and diverse activities of postal services by a single individual. Therefore, it is essential to have a team of competent persons who are entrusted with responsibilities depending upon their areas of specialisation and their powers are shared among themselves. Apart from the full-time functional Members of the Board there must be some part-time Member representing different interest or what may be called the 'stakeholders' in policy formulation. The Department of Posts can neither be self-sufficient nor self contained in managing its affairs. It is required to interact with a large number of Departments like Finance, Railways, Electronics, Labour, Personnel, Surface Transport and the organizations like Indian Airlines and Air India. For better postal services greater and cordial relation are required with these Departments. Such Departments should have complete involvement in policy formulation.

Public concern for the quality of postal activities and services is greater today than ever before. This has two major consequences. Firstly, the Department may take into account the need of the community and secondly it must have an effective measure of social responsibility and make them more accountable. Thus, the postal services must be responsive and responsible to the public at large. This requires greater interaction with the representatives of industries, bulk users, publishers, universities, organizations engaged in sending dividends, etc. All this requires a broad based Board giving representation to different interest groups.

Taking cognizance of all these factors, the Board may consist of the following members:

- Chairman	1
- Full-time functional Members	4
- Part-time Members, representatives from the Ministry of Finance, Electronics, Personnel, Railways and Surface Transport	5
- Representatives of Airlines Corporations	2
- Representatives from Association of Indian Universities and Indira Gandhi National Open University	2
- Representatives of the bulk users of the postal services	3
- Experts in the areas of Finance, Economics, Electronics, Management, etc.	4
- Trade Union leaders	2
	-----
Total	25
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Thus this Policy-Directing Board should consist of about 20 part-time Members, besides Chairman and four other full-time functional Members. It would also have representatives from different Ministries preferable at the level of Secretary/Additional Secretary. The presence of part-time Members who are not directly connected with the execution of the postal activities would enable the Board to view the postal services with a wider outlook. With the participation of the employees, the Board will have the benefit of the view-point of the workers.

This Policy-Directing Board will have both the policy making and executive functions pertaining to all activities of the Department of Posts and should exercise all powers of the Government of India. The whole Board may meet at least once in three months for policy making; while for the discharge of executive functions, the Chairman along with four full-time Members may meet more frequently, atleast once in a fortnight.

### **Delegation of Powers**

The success of the Board will not depend merely on its composition but on adequate delegation of power from the Government to the Board and from Board to its Members and down below. In centralisation, the Board and the Chairman may be burdened with minor matter; while others down in the hierarchy are deprived of taking decision in their respective area of functions. This also takes away the initiative to bring innovations and absolve them of the necessary responsibility without adequate authority.

At the time of reconstitution of the Board, it was envisaged that Postal Services Board would exercise all administrative and financial power as may find necessary for the efficient operation of postal services. There are number of limitations in the exercise of these powers.

### **Administrative Powers**

The Board and the Director General, as in the past, between themselves exercise all administrative powers relating to the Department of Posts in the Ministry, of course, with the approval, where necessary, of Minister of Communications. The Director General enjoys all powers relating to appointments, transfers and postings. However, if necessary, the Director General may place any matter, which the otherwis can dispose of himself, before the Board for discussion and suitable recommendations as to the action to be taken. Such powers have number of limitations as prescribed by the Department of Personnel and the Ministry of Finance.

### **Financial Powers**

The Board exercises all financial powers delegated to the Ministries of the Government of India as per existing delegation of financial powers. Member (Finance)



functions as an Integrated Financial Adviser. He acts as an internal financial adviser, that is to say, he is consulted on internal financial matters in the exercise of delegated powers. He also acts as external financial adviser in respect of matters outside the competence of the Board and represents and exercises the powers of the Ministry of Finance (Department of Expenditure) in this regard. The financial powers delegated to the Director General of Posts and his subordinate authority are exercised by those authorities in consultation with their Internal Financial Advisers. For the Director General (Posts) such internal financial advice is rendered by the Member (Finance) and by his subordinate officers at the Headquarters. For heads of the circle such an advice is rendered by the internal financial adviser attached to them.

Technically, Secretary (Posts) exercises all powers of the Ministry in the administrative matters. Similarly, he also exercises financial powers in consultation with Financial Adviser who is a Member (Finance), Postal Board.

It must be realised that managing gigantic activity like postal services requires collective powers and collective responsibility. It is observed that Members of the Board have neither administrative powers nor have any financial powers. However, Member (Finance) has certain financial powers as internal financial adviser. Almost all administrative and financial powers, like creation of posts, renting of accommodation, sales and purchase of building grants of loans, appropriation and reappropriation, transfers, officiating arrangements, leave, pension, gratuity entering into contracts, resignations, etc. are being exercised by the Director General (Posts). In the absence of powers to the Members of the Board, many of the operational activities get delayed and the Board cannot act as a team responsible for the policy formulation and monitoring and evaluation of implementation of the policies.

In order to enable the Board to function affectively, there is need for enhanced power-both administrative and financial-to the Postal Services Board. The Board should have all the powers of the Government. Its decision must be binding on all concerned within the concept of accountability to the Parliament, Comptroller and Auditor General of India and other such bodies in the financial matters. Within the given budget allocation, the Board should have the final authority in all financial matters. Once the decisions are taken by the Board the same should not be subjected to any approval by other concerned departments of the Government.

The Board should be authorised to exercise all powers of the Central Government in the areas of policy formulation, fixation of postal rates, regulation, development, coordination, research and development, monitoring and evaluation, operation, staff matters procurement of material, equipment, etc.. Some of these functions are at present being

performed by other Ministries and departments of the Governments and the necessary approval of those departments and Ministries is required. All such functional powers should how be vested with the Board. It should also be empowered to generate its own resources for meeting the growing needs of development and operation of the commercial activities. This may be done by amending the existing rules or by suitable legal arrangement where by the Board has enhanced power in operating some of its activities on commercial lines. The higher rates of services and facilities may result into cross subsidisation.

The Chairman as a Chief Executive is responsible for the overall effectiveness of the Department of Posts and in carrying out the plan and objectives approved by the Board. He should be vested with sufficient powers to discharge these responsibilities subject to the policy guidelines laid down by the Board. In emergency he should be given full powers of the Board subject to adequate responsibility and presentation to the Board in the subsequent meetings. The Chairman should have a status of Principal Secretary to the Government. Besides the normal function like presiding over the Board's meeting co-ordination, he should also share some of the functional responsibilities.

The full-time Members have dual responsibility. As a Member of the Board they have to help in shaping the policy and as head of functional activities they are responsible for the execution of the plans and objectives approved by the Board. They should be given full powers in their respective area of functions so that they can get policies implemented effectively within the general guidelines and policies as laid down by the Board. The status of the full-time functional Members be raised to that of a Secretary to the Government of India and given sufficient administrative and financial powers.

Thus the Board should act as a policy making body and the Chairman and functional Member should be responsible for its execution. The following items should received special attention of the Board:

1. Laying down objectives and setting targets;
2. Policy regarding modernization and R&D
3. Approval of the budget of the various circles and units of the Department;
4. Scrutiny of the feasibility of new projects and activities;
5. Quarterly financial review;
6. Manpower planning, sanctions of the staff, formulating general policies relating to recruitment, promotions and industrial relations;
7. Designing of Appraisal System;
8. Training development; and
9. Reorganization of postal organizations including opening of new circles.



Within these broad guidelines, the functional Members would control its operation in their respective areas. It would be expected that the various units of the postal organizations and the Circles would be given sufficient operational autonomy. The operating units should be required to get the approval or the concurrence on such administrative and financial matters in which there is certain deviation from the declared policies, prescribed rules and regulations and the general guidelines laid down by the Board. The Board should not interfere into the day-to-day operational activities of the different units of the Department or Postal Circles.

### Directorate

The Postal Directorate is actually the headquarters of the Department of Posts. All these years the Directorate has been regarded as a subordinate or attached office of the Government of India. The Director General is the Head of the Department. Owing to the special nature of postal operations, the Director General has been entrusted with a certain higher powers than those to other heads of department.

The Directorate is an entity which is technically distinct from the Board. The Chairman, Postal Services Board is the Director General. However, the Members of the Board do not enjoy similar technical position. By practice and convention they deputise for the Director General in all matters.

To assist the Members, there is a usual hierarchy of officers in various grades at positions like Deputy Director General at the senior administrative level, Assistant Director General at the senior administrative level, Directors at the junior administrative level and the Assistant Director at the Under Secretary level. The organization below this level follows the normal secretarial pattern with section officer, assistants, clerks, etc. The attached charts gives a graphic presentation of the present set up of the Directorate.

Some of the representatives of the postal employees unions have pointed out that there has been increased in the strength of employees in the Directorate over all these years and the same is disproportionate to the expansion of the staff in the field organizations. The number of Deputy Director General in senior administrative grade Director in Junior Administrative Grade and senior time scale Additional Directors are respectively, 16, 21, 24 in the Headquarters as compared to 40, 68 and 234 in the field organizations. However, some of the officials of the Directorate have a feeling that the size of the directorate is justified taking into consideration the constitutional responsibility of parliamentary control, vigilance matters, attending to the complaints of the public and the development of postal services in different areas, augmenting the existing services, conducting research and development of technology, besides the over all responsibility of formulating policies and monitoring their implementation.

It has been observed that the expansion at the lower levels in the Directorate is basically because of normal secretarial practices and the hierarchy there to in disposing of the business of the postal services. If the Directorate has to become the nerve centre of doing the high level policy formulation, it has to shed some of its secretarial practices and the staff associated therein. Except for those activities, where the Secretary to the Postal board has been made responsible there is no need to have secretarial staff for the operational and development activities. To a very limited extent such secretarial assistance may be available to the activities relating to the personnel and finance. Administrative reforms towards officer/desk oriented system can result into the reduction of the staff. Basically for all matters there is a need to have only three levels, namely, initiation, scrutiny and decision-making levels. Such levels need to be identified depending upon the nature of work and responsibility. Adequate delegation of powers to the field organisations can also contribute to the reduction of delay and staff at the Headquarters.

For most of the operational and developmental activities field staff should be brought on tenure bases. Such a system would result into a better exchange of ideas and concepts between the Headquarters and the field organisations. This is particularly essential owing to the changing nature of the postal operations requiring wider field experience.

The Directorate, like a corporate office, should consist of a team of competent experienced personnel who are highly professional in the postal operations. Taking into consideration the development of new activities it might also be essential to bring professionals other than those belonging to the Indian Postal Service at the higher administrative positions for a specified period in newer areas of activities.

There is a need to rationalise the whole organizational set up. Some of the suggested aspects could be staff matters relating to traditional personnel, establishment functions, training, industrial relations and employees welfare should be under the direct control of Member (Personnel) and he should be assisted by three Deputy Director Generals, one each in the area of Personnel; Training and R&D; Industrial relations and Employees Welfare. At present the matters relating to industrial relations and staff welfare are being dealt with by the Member (Development). The Secretary, Postal Service Board should deal with matters pertaining to general administration of the Directorate, administrative reforms, parliamentary questions and other similar activities. He should be suitably assisted by 2/3 Directors.

The Principal, Staff Training College should become a part of the activities under the control of Deputy Director General (Trg). Such an arrangement would result into a better coordination between various aspects of training programmes conducted by the Department. The Vigilance matters as at present should continue to be under the direct

charge of the Chairman. The Chairman should also handle some of the specific activities, besides international relations, depending upon the areas of interest of the incumbent in question.

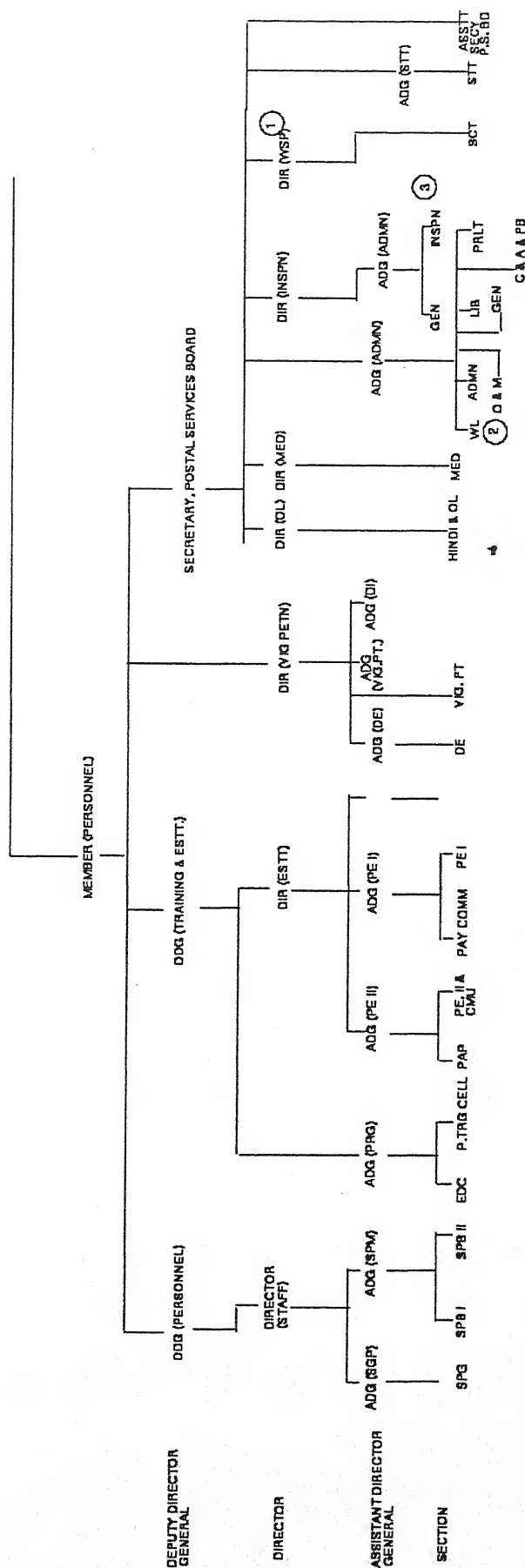
Apart from the suggested rationalization there is a need to strengthen the Directorate with some of the activities like public relations, redressal of public grievances, costing of the postal operations, designing MIS and strengthening statistical cell and O & M cell.

### Summing Up

Taking cognizance of all factors as explained above, re- organization on the following bases is being suggested.

1. It must be recognised that the commercial aspects of the postal operations is an important activity and is likely to increase tremendously in the near future.
2. The present organizational set up has failed to create sufficient autonomy and efficiency required for postal services.
3. For a wider interaction with all concerned and interest groups, it is essential to associate outsiders in the policy- making of postal operations.
4. The Policy-Directing Board consisting of representatives of the industries, universities and such other bulk users of the postal service alongwith expert economist and management be made part-time Members of the Board. Such Members would be expected to protect different interest as well as give guidance to the Board in policy formulation.
5. Apart from the expert outsiders and the interest group representatives, the Board should consist of four full-time Members representing different areas of specialization.
6. The work between these Members should be divided on functional bases like Personnel, Finance, Operation, Development and Commercial. All the Members should have equal status except that the Chairman who would be given the right to preside and coordinate the activities of all the Members.
7. Once the status of the Member (Finance) and other Members is raised to the level equivalent to that of the Secretary to the Government of India, many of the problems relating to administrative and finance aspects, it is, asumed would be solved.
8. These full-time Member would be assisted by a group of experts in their respective area of functions and a small secretariat.
9. It is expected that the experts and the secretariat attached to the Board would be kept to the bearest minimum. Some experts other than from the Indian Postal Service would also be brought into the Directorate.

10. The Board would meet as frequently as desirable but not later than once in three months.
11. It is expected that all policies would have been thoroughly discussed with the experts and the regional organizations by the respective Members before it is brought to the Board for their final approval.
12. All Board meetings would be fully documented; memoranda and the working papers for the Board would be prepared and circulated among the Members well in advance.
13. Once the policy has been taken by the Board, each individual Member would be responsible for its effective implementation. For this all necessary powers should be given to the Members.
14. The Board would be collectively and the Members individually responsible for monitoring any evaluation of its policies.
15. It is expected that the Directorate would expeditiously communicate Board's decisions to the field organisations.
16. A document consisting of specific powers of each of the Members and their areas of activity would be prepared in sufficient detail.
17. The Directorate work would be rationalised and strengthened in the emerging areas of activities.

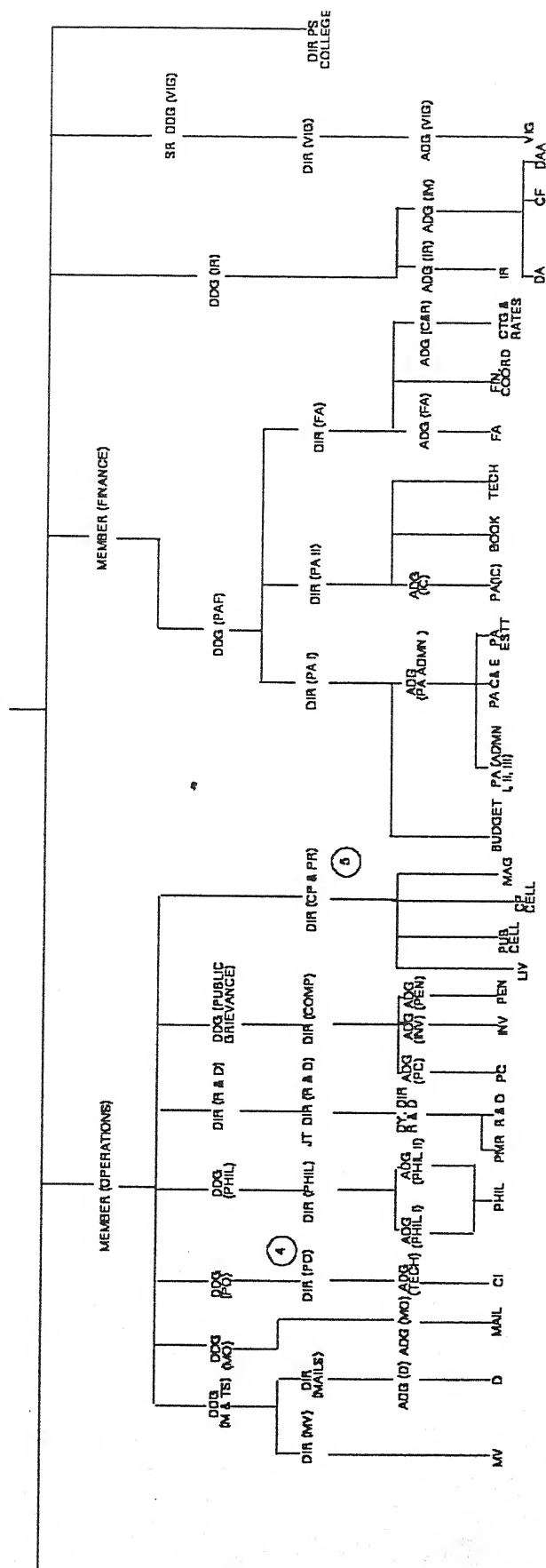


**LEGENDS:**

NOTE:-

1. FOR LIMITED PURPOSE OF FUNCTIONING OF SCT CELL.
2. FOR FUNCTIONING OF DIRECTORATE WELFARE FUND
3. FOR HOUSE KEEPING FUNCTIONS
4. ALSO UNDER ODG (MM) FOR LIMITED PURPOSE OF PRINT
5. COMMON FOR BOTH THE DEPARTMENTS.
6. FOR LIMITED PURPOSE OF N B SECTION WORK
7. FOR LIMITED PURPOSE OF PRINTING PRESS WORK.

SGP	:	STAFF GAZETTED POSTAL
SPN	:	STAFF NON GAZETTED POSTAL
CM	:	CARRIER MANAGEMENT
PAY	:	PAY COMMISSION CELL
COMM	:	
DE	:	DEPARTMENTAL EXAMINATIONS
WIG PT	:	VIGILANCE PETITIONS
DI	:	DEPARTMENTAL INQUIRIES
SCT	:	SCHEDULE CASTES TRIBES
EDC	:	EXTRADEPARTMENTAL CELL



M & TS	:	MAILS & TRANSPORTATIONS.	:	PMR	:	POSTAL MACHINES RESEARCH
'DV	:	MOTOR VEHICLES	:	CP & PR	:	COMMERCIAL PUBLICITY & PUBLIC RELATION
MD	:	MAILS	:	IR	:	INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
CI	:	POSTAL INLAND TECH.	:	IM	:	INTERNATIONAL MAILS
P.O.	:	PLAN OPERATIONS	:	CF	:	TECH. FOREIGN.
P. G.	:	PUBLIC GRIEVANCES	:	DAA	:	AIR MAILS ACCOUNTS

[illegible]

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## CHAPTER - 3

## THE FIELD SET-UP

## CIRCLE

The existing field organisation of the postal services consist of six-tier system. Annexure-I provides circle and region-wise details. The country is divided into 19 Circles each one headed by a Postmaster General (PMG) of the Senior Administrative Grade (SAG) of the Indian Postal Service. While each Circle looks after the postal services for the State concerned and is generally co-terminus with a State except the North-Eastern Circle, West Bengal Circle and Maharashtra Circle. North-Eastern Circle comprising the States of Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Tripura, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh. The State of Sikkim is included in West Bengal Circle and State of Goa is included in Maharashtra Circle. The functions of the PMG mainly relate to:

- planning, direction and review within the Circle;
- establishment of procedures, standards and offering of guidelines;
- efficient operation of all post offices within the Circle in accordance with official delegations and prescribed policies, procedures and standards;
- referral to the directorate of matters requiring higher decision; and
- reporting of performance, special problems, trends etc.

In order to provide administrative support in the day to day functioning of PMG some posts of Additional Postmasters General in SAG level were sanctioned in 1981. In six Circles that is, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, North-Eastern, Tamil Nadu, Tripura and West Bengal, there are two Additional Postmasters General in each Circle and 9 Circles (other than, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir) are having one each Additional Postmasters General. In the Circles where two posts of Additional PMsG exist, one post each from the Circle is located outside the Circle headquarters. There are five posts of Additional PMsG located outside the Circle headquarters at Kanpur, Siliguri, Madurai, Vijayawada and Nagpur. These five PMsG have been assigned a territorial jurisdiction and vested with some powers of the PMsG. The Additional PMsG at Circle headquarters work as more staff officers of the PMsG, coordinating the work of the sectional officers of the Circle office and, in addition, look after a designated territorial jurisdiction.



From 1.3.1989, there has been a change in the Circle set-up by granting greater autonomy to SAG officers. Postal circles having more than one SAG officers will be headed by a Chief Postmaster General and those Circles having only one SAG officer will be headed by the Postmaster General. As explained in the previous section each State was having a Postmaster General assisted by the Additional Post Masters General. These Additional Post Masters General, by and large, were not given any distinct responsibility as well as independent territorial jurisdiction. It was observed that a large number of postal circles were 'witnessing conflicting situations in the exercise of the powers between PMG and the Additional PMsG.' As a consequence of this decision, a pattern in the Circle set-up which has emerged clearly indicate that in large Circles like Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal where the area of the Circle revenue as well as volume of traffic is large have been put bifurcated under three SAG officers. In States like Bihar, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, North-East, Punjab, Rajasthan, Gujarat, the responsibilities are assigned to two SAG officers. While in the case of the smaller Circles like Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and Assam, there is no bifurcation of the Circle and the entire States in such cases is to be looked after by the PMG alone. In this newly introduced set-up, the existing powers of the Post Master General will be exercised by the respective territorial Postmasters General in their areas. They would be independent in their jurisdiction for all postal operations relating to (postal and RMS) units. They would also be responsible for savings bank operations and national savings mobilization in their areas. Regarding establishment and planning, it has been decided that all the powers of the Postmaster General will be exercised by the territorial Postmasters General in their jurisdiction. However, the Chief Postmaster General will be over all in-charge of the entire circle in the planning and development of the postal network and infrastructural facilities like land and buildings, monitoring the efficiency of the services and would also coordinate the mail arrangement for the entire Circle. The Chief PMG would also be responsible for coordinating with State Government, Railways, Airlines and the Civil Administration. He would also be responsible for maintaining the uniformity in management of the Circle as a whole and also monitor the efficiency of the operations in the Circle. In the streamlined set-up the Chief Postmaster General has been vested with the responsibility of sending special performance report to the Members of the Board in respect of SAG officers posted in the Circle so as to enable the Members of the Postal Board to write CRs of SAG officers. It is also stipulated, that each of the territory would have a separate budget. However, the Postal Accounts Organization will continue to have the existing set-up. It is also stipulated that the existing Regional Directors would assist the respective Postmaster General in the management of the postal services. Another innovation in the newly introduced postal circle set-up relate to the establishment of a Circle Management Committee. The Chief Postmaster General will serve as a Chairman of this Committee and Postmasters General and IFA as Members. The primary functions of this Committee will be : (1) to draw up plans for operational improvements; (2) improve

financial management; and (3) an improvement of consumer satisfaction in postal operations.

### Region

Each postal Circle is further divided into a number of regions under a Junior Administrative Grade (JAG) officer to the Indian Postal Service. At present there are 37 regions in the country. Prior to April 1979, the Directors of Postal Services had been working from the Circle headquarters under the direct control of PMG. It was felt that the field set-up of the postal services had become rather centralised and it could not provide better and efficient services to the masses. In order to give the entire postal services a field orientation the decentralisation of postal services was introduced in April 1979. Under this scheme, officers in the rank of Director of Postal Services functioning at the Circle headquarters were dispersed to the different regions away from the Circle headquarters to keep up with the general policy of the Government to expand its services and improve the quality of performance in the urban and rural areas.

The Regional Director are made responsible for efficient functioning of the services within the region. They are fully responsible for complaints, investigations, vigilance (non-gazetted level), mail arrangements, postal operations postal planning, inspections, maintenance and repairs of building, budgeting, public relations and staff relations in their respective areas. The Regional Directors exercise all the administrative powers now exercised by PMG within their respective areas, subject to overall superintendence of the PMG. However with the introduction of the territorial PMsG from 1.3.1989, the Regional Directors will function as staff officers of the PMsG.

### Division

Every postal Circle is further divided into postal Divisions (numbering 431 as on 31.3.1987), which are placed incharge of a Divisional Superintendent, who reports to the concerned Regional Director. Annexure II gives field formations of the postal services (except Kerala and Madhya Pradesh Circles). This annexure provides circle-wise status of Superintendents of postal divisions as well as Head Postmasters, besides giving revenue districts covered by each postal division. The status of the Divisional Superintendent depends on the work load in the Division and on this basis these officials belong to JAG (7), Group 'A' Senior Time Scale (109), Group 'A' Junior Time Scale (75), Group 'B' (240). The officers in the JAG and Group 'A' are from the cadre of the Indian Postal Service, the officers who man posts in Group 'B' are from the cadre of Postal Superintendents Service (PSS) (Annexure II and Annexure III). The main function of Divisional Officers are:

- Assessment of the requirements of postal facilities in the area covered by the division and provisioning of such facilities including opening of post

offices, hiring of buildings, installations of letter boxes, etc.

- Work out manpower requirement to man the facilities; initiate and process proposal for sanctioning thereof;
- Recruitment to certain Class III and IV cadres;
- Order postings, transfers, arrange for training of personnel and deal with connected staff matters including disciplinary proceedings, etc.
- Liaison with Service Unions to maintain staff relations; and organise welfare activities;
- Conduct inspections and take follow up action of the Inspection Reports of the Post Offices (including Branch and Head Post Offices);
- Deal with public complaints and maintain liaison with District Authorities; and
- Ensure efficient running of the post offices in the division and exercise general control.

Postal divisions are further divided into sub-divisions which are incharge of officials known as Sub-Divisional Inspectors of Post Offices. There are 1589\* Postal Sub-Divisions in the country. Assistant Superintendents of Post Offices (ASPO) and Inspectors of Posts (IPO) are the main categories of inspecting staff in the postal branch. The Assistant Superintendents of Post Offices are employed in the larger postal divisions to assist the Superintendents in inspections and general administration. Inspectors of Post Offices are employed in various capacities; but most of them are incharge of sub-divisions where they inspect the smaller post offices and mail lines, verify the cash balances of head post offices, and investigate cases relating to frauds etc. They have administrative control over postmen and Class IV staffs, whom they are competent to appoint. They are also employed as Head Clerks and Complaints Inspectors in divisional offices, and as Planning Inspectors and Investigating Inspectors in circle offices.

#### **Head Post Office**

The postal service in the country are operated through different types of post offices. At the apex level is the Head Post Office. There are 853 Head Post Offices in the country. The Head Post may be incharge of a Group 'A' officer, (15), Group 'B' officer,

(123) or a non-gazetted official in the Higher Selection Grade I (246) or Higher Selection Grade II (451) - (Annexure IV). A majority of the Head Post Offices are in the Higher Selection Grade. A postal division normally administer two or three Head Post Offices. The Head Post Office, apart from providing all counter services like any other post office, controls all the Sub-Post Offices and Branch Post Offices under its jurisdiction in the matter of financing and accounting. The administrative control of the officials working in the post offices, however, rests with the Divisional Superintendents of Post Offices. Some important functions of a Head Post Office are given below:

- It maintains initial accounts relating to transactions at the Head Post Office and all Sub-Post Offices under it.
- The accounts received from the Sub-Post Offices under it is scrutinised at the Head Post Office with the help of various lists and vouchers received.
- The maximum and minimum cash balances and authorised balance in respect of various types of stamps like postage stamps, revenue stamps etc., are fixed for each Head Post Office and Sub-Post Offices by the Superintendent of Post Offices. The Head Post Office has to ensure that the sub-offices under it are working within the authorised limits and are detaining cash and stamps etc. beyond the permissible limits without valid reasons.
- A Head Post Office draw stamps from the District Treasury of Circle Stamps Depot and supplies the same to its subordinate offices.
- A Head Post Office also acts as a cash office to provide the necessary finance for some of the sub-post offices.
- A Head Post Office functions as the drawing and disbursing office for salary and allowances of the officials working there and those working in sub-post offices and branch post offices placed under their supervision. It has a fulfledged accounts branch which also maintains the service-books/service rolls of the officials working in the Head Post Offices and sub-post offices and also deals with the payment of pension.
- All the savings bank transactions of sub-post offices are thoroughly checked by the Head Post Offices including the signature of the depositor wherever necessary. They also maintain accounts-wise ledger card for each savings bank account and post the transactions taking place in the sub-post offices and the branch post offices. The interest is also calculated by Head Post

Office and posted in the pass books calling for the same from sub-post offices.

The Sub-Post Office normally is in charge of an official known as Sub-Post Master who can be in the Higher Selection Grade II, Lower Selection Grade or Time Scale Postal Assistant, depending upon the number of officials working in that office. A Sub-Post Office performs all the functions of a post office. In addition, it controls financing and accounting regarding to the branch post offices which are under its control. As on 31.3.1987, there were 24,335 departmental sub-post offices and 2,905 extra departmental sub-post offices. Branch Post Offices are generally in charge of extra departmental officials located mainly in the rural areas of the country. These are in charge of extra departmental Post Masters. A departmental post office can be categorised as either delivery post office or non-delivery post office. A delivery post office is one which, apart from providing counter services, also received postal articles for delivery from that office, and there will be postmen staff. However, not all sub-post offices are delivery post offices. As on 31.3.1987, there were 1,18,819 branch post offices in the country.

### **Railway Mail Service**

The Railway Mail Service (RMS) branch of the posts deal exclusively with the sorting and transmission of mails. As mail transportation was principally along the railway lines, concentration points of mail known as sorting offices came into being. A sorting office is usually at a junction station or at important towns where a considerable volume of mails are generated for sorting and consignment in different directions. These offices, depending upon the volume of mails handled, work in two to three sets and at important centres these offices work round the clock. The mails being handled by these offices are of two kinds, i.e., first class mail and second class mail. The term first class mail includes articles such as envelopes, inland letter cards, post cards, money orders, registered articles, registered letters and air surcharge paid parcels and air surcharge paid book packets. These articles are invariably routed by air wherever possible and their routing by surface is resorted to only when there is no distinct advantage in air routing. Today there are about 60 air mail centres in the country and more and more mail is being despatched by air to different air centres to facilitate quick and expeditious transmission. Second class mails consists of the distinct categories, i.e., parcels and printed matters. Parcel mail handled today is more than two million pieces a year.

In the Postal Board, the functions relating to Railway Mail Service is looked after by Member (Postal Operations). He is assisted by two Deputy Directors General in the Senior Administrative Grade, one Director in the Junior Administrative Grade and two Assistant Directors General in the Senior Time Scale. In addition, there are four Directors

in the Junior Administrative Grade at the four metropolitan towns, i.e., Bombay, Madras, Calcutta and Delhi. They are principally concerned with mail planning and operations and more specifically with the following responsibilities.

- To coordinate with the Circles in each region in matters relating to conveyance of mail by road, rail and air and liaise with the concerned Railway Authorities, Indian Airlines Corporation and Road Transport Authorities in solving problems.
- To attend coordination committee meetings with the Railways, Indian Airlines Corporation and State Transport Authorities.
- Carry out in-depth review of mail arrangements in each Circle with a view to suggest improvements.
- Inspection of Higher Sorting Cadre mail offices in the region focussing attention on technical aspects.
- Visits to key sorting offices and post offices to study the functioning and suggest improvements in sorting and delivery arrangements.
- Conduct live mail sample surveys as assigned by the Directorate.
- To tender technical advice to the Postmaster General on matters relating to:
  - Reorganisation of mail offices/sections.
  - Sorting pattern in mail offices and Post Offices.
  - Reduce number of handlings in mail offices by suggesting suitable sorting pattern.
  - Opening of new mail offices/sections.
  - Mechanisation - scope and planning.
  - Speed Post Service operations.

At the field level, the RMS work is looked after by the PMsG who are incharge of the Postal Circles (Annexure VIII). The PMsG are assisted in their work by the Directors of Postal Services. Each Postal Circle has one or more Railway Mail Service Divisions. The RMS Divisions located at major airports are known as Airport Sorting Divisions. The Railway Mail Service Divisions are headed by the Divisional Superintendents. Depending upon the staff strength and size, these divisions are placed under the charge of a senior time scale officer of the Indian Postal Service Group 'A' (Class I) or an officer belonging to the Postal Superintendent's Service Group 'B' (Class II).

There are at present 68 RMS Divisions in the country. Each Divisional Superintendent is assisted in his work by a Deputy Superintendent RMS (in the Postal Superintendent's Service Group 'B'), or by Assistant Superintendent RMS. Supporting clerical and other staff is also sanctioned for all Divisional Superintendents.

Under a Railway Mail Service Division, there are a number of mail offices and sections. These are the operative offices dealing with the sorting and transmission of mails. Sections meaning thereby, mobile offices of Railway Mail Service work in running trains (these mobile sections have been withdrawn from March 1983) whereas mail offices are stationary offices. There are two categories of mail offices and sections - transit mail offices and transit sections and sorting mail offices and sorting sections. Transit mail offices and transit sections deal only with closed bags whereas sorting mail offices and sorting sections, in addition to handling closed bags, also perform the work relating to the sorting of mails.

The entire system of sorting was reviewed in 1983. While examining the issue the following main points emerged:

- "The sender normally while addressing the letter wrote the name of the person, the Street/Area, the Town, District and finally the State.
- A large number of articles were pertaining to the District H.Q. from the resent of the District.
- The buses emanated from the District H.Q. and fanned out into the interior of the District.
- The major H.Qs. were at District Headquarters.
- The supervisory manpower was concentrated in the District H.Q. and normally each had one Postal Division headquartered there.
- The number of Districts was reasonably stable."

Taking all these and other factors into consideration, it was decided in 1983 to follow the District pattern of sorting. This entailed earmarking one Mail Office for each district (where there was more than one) as the inward Mail Office of receipt of all the Mails for the District. All other Mail Offices in the District would function only as an outward Mail Office. It was also decided that in the same State between an outward Mail Office in a District and Inward Mail Offices in other Districts, there should be a direct bag without the intervention of any intermediary Mail Office. All Airports within the country

act as Inward Mail Offices are specific Areas within the State. Dependent on the quantum of Mails interstate bags are to be closed for these airports. In addition, for adjoining States depending once again on the quantum district/station bags are closed.

The mail offices are under the charge of a Higher Selection Grade or a Lower Selection Grade or a Time Scale Official who are known as Head Sorting Assistants. Similarly, Sorting Sections can be under the charge of a Lower Selection Grade or a Time Scale official designated as Head Sorting Assistant. Head Sorting Assistants are assisted by Sorting Assistants who are the basic operative hands responsible for sorting and routing of mails.

Each RMS Division has a Head Record Office and a number of Sub-Record Offices who are entrusted with the job of staff arrangements, maintaining records and distribution of forms and stationery etc. to the mail offices attached to them. In addition, the Head Record Offices attached to them. In addition, the Head Record Officers are also responsible for the disbursement of pay and allowances of the entire staff of the RMS Division.

There are also a number of functional units in each Circle reporting to the Circle Office and servicing one or more Postal and RMS Divisions. There are the Mail Motor Service (Annexure XII) responsible to carry mails between Post Offices and RMS offices and between them and the railway stations or airports or sea ports. For this purpose, the organisation maintains a fleet of vehicles and workshops for carrying out repairs. At present 90 Mail Motor Service units are operating in various circles. The details are given in Annexure VIII. Accounts Officers, ICO (SBCO) also report to the PMG. There are a number of Postal Stock Depots (PSDs) responsible for supply of various items of stationery and equipment to RMS & Post Offices. The Foreign Post Offices function as independent units at selected places to exchange mail with foreign countries. The States of their Controlling Offices varies from place to place.

There are two other important aspects of the field set-up which merits detailed discussion for a proper understanding of the issues in the organizational set-up of the postal services.

#### **Criteria for Opening of Postal Facilities in Urban & Rural Areas**

There are well defined norms for opening of post offices in the rural and urban areas. Post Offices to be opened in rural areas have been classified into two categories:

- Post Offices in normal rural areas; and
- Post Offices in tribal or backward areas.



### **Opening of Post Offices in normal Rural Areas**

Post Offices in 'Gram Panchayat' villages may be opened subject to the following conditions:

- There is no other Post Office within the radius of 3 kms. from the proposed post office; and
- The proposed Post Office is expected to yield income to the extent of atleast 25 percent of its estimated cost.

Post Offices in 'Non-Gram Panchayat' villages may be opened subject to the following conditions:

- The population of the village should be 2,000 or more;
- There is no other Post Office within the radius of 3 kms. from the proposed Post Office; and
- The Post Office is expected to yield income to the extent of atleast 25 percent of its estimated cost.

### **Opening of Post Offices in Tribal and Backward Areas**

Post Offices in 'Gram-Panchayat' villages may be opened subject to the following conditions:

- There is no other Post Office within the radius of 3 kms. from the proposed Post Office; and
- The proposed Post Office is expected to yield income to the extent of atleast 10 percent of its estimated cost.

Post Offices in 'Non-Gram Panchayat' villages may be opened subject to the following conditions:

- The village (or an integrated cluster of villages within a radius of 1.5 kms.) should have a population of 1,000 or more;
- There should not be another Post Office within the radius of 3 kms. from the proposed Post Office; and
- The proposed Post Office is expected to yield income to the extent of atleast 10 percent of its estimated cost.

### **Criteria for opening Post Offices in Urban Areas**

Post Offices are opened in urban areas subject to the following conditions:

- The Post Office should be financially self-supporting;
- The minimum distance between two Post Offices should be 1 km. in cities with a population of 20 lakhs and above. In other urban areas, the minimum distance between two Post Offices should be 1.5 kms.; and
- Heads of Circles are competent to relax the distance condition in 10 percent of the cases every year.

### **Time Test and Field Set-up**

The staff in Post Offices is sanctioned, based on the yardstick of a "Time Test". This inductive formula, under which different time allowances are provided for certain individual operations relating to various kinds of post office traffic and general time allowance for others has been in use in India for more than eight decades. The total work load for all office is assessed in terms of time based on the above formula and the justified staff sanctioned for the office. Some of the important norms for, conversion, bifurcation and status are given below:

### **Standards of Inspector of Post Offices**

The standards for the creation of post of Sub-Divisional Inspector is on the annual work-load on account of the items specified here under, have been expressed as a co-efficient of 1,900 man hours per annum after due weightage having been given for the following items of work:

- Verification/Inspection of Office viz., Head Offices and Sub- Offices and extra Departmental branch offices.
- Departmental staff like mail overseers, cash overseers postmen, village postman and Class IV officials directly under IPOs and work connected therewith.
- Extra-departmental staff directly under the Inspector of Post Offices and the work connected therewith.
- Fixed items, like verification of money orders, submission of dues returns, maintenance of registers, weekly diaries, monthly summaries, posting of test, trial cards etc.

- Other supervisory work like complaints, public relations, frauds and investigation etc. and
- Miscellaneous work like visits, journeys, public relations, emergency arrangements during breaches etc.

#### **Criteria for Upgradation of Sub-Offices into Head Post Offices**

- Each district should have a Head Post Office provided a minimum of 20 Sub-Post Offices can be attached to it. In the case of backward areas or places if there will be a definite improvement in financial Sub-Post Offices/Branch Post Offices, a lower standard may be adopted, subject, as at present, to the approval of the Directorate.
- An existing Head Post Offices should be bifurcated if the number of Sub-Offices attached to it exceeds 60. It should be ensured that as a result of the change, neither the new nor the old Head Post Office has less than 20 Sub-Post Offices attached it.

#### **HEAD POST OFFICE**

##### **Conversion to Group 'A' Head Post Offices**

- Gazetted Head Post Office (Group B) will be eligible for conversion to Gazetted Post Office (Group A) when the number of points earned i.e., parameters for Dy. Postmasters and Assistant Postmasters added together come to 11,000. The post of Gazetted Postmaster Group 'A' will be positional one. This post will be, in addition to the existing Group 'B' post which will be converted to Deputy Postmaster.
- The number of Dy. Postmaster (Gazetted) Group 'B' and Additional Postmasters (HSG) will be determined on the number of points earned for Deputy Postmaster and Assistant Postmasters separately. A post of Deputy Postmasters (Gazetted) will be sanctioned against 2,200 points.
- The number of Additional Postmasters (HSG) will be sanctioned at the rate of one APM for 2,200 points of workload. The first post of Additional Postmasters will be in HSG-I and other posts in HSG-II.

##### **Conversion to Group 'B' Head Post Offices**

- A Head Post Office (Non-Gazetted) will qualify for conversion of Gazetted (Group B) status when it earns 4,200 points or above on the basis of parameters for Postmasters and Deputy Postmasters in Class II added together.

- The Postmasters will be adjusted against a workload of 2,200 points. The Postmasters would be delegating his delegable functions to the Deputy Postmaster and hence the points in excess of 2,200 of the Postmaster Group B would be added to the points of Deputy Postmaster and the number of posts of Deputy Postmasters calculated thereafter. The number of Deputy Postmasters will be rounded off rounded at 0.5 or above.
- The first post of Deputy Postmaster in Group B (Gazetted) Post Office will be in HSG-I and the subsequent posts in HSG-II. On conversion of a HSG-I Post Office to Group B the existing HSG-I post of Postmaster will be continued and resigned as Deputy Postmasters against the first justified post of Deputy Postmasters, and in actual practice only a new post in PMS Group B will be created.

#### **Postal Divisions - Status**

##### **All Postal Divisions where:**

- there is a Gazetted level office; or
- there are three or more non-gazetted Head Offices or HSG Sub-Offices; or
- the clerical strength including the LSG and HSG in the Divisions exceeds 450, should be in Class I. All others will be Class II Divisions.

#### **Bifurcation**

The Postal Division may be bifurcated if the aggregate workload of a Divisional Superintendent of Post Offices and the Assistant Superintendent of Post Offices in a particular Divisions exceeds 2.6. If such a Division cannot be bifurcated for administrative or practical reasons a Deputy Superintendent of Post Offices should be provided in addition to the Assistant Superintendent in such a Division.

#### **Railway Mail Service Division**

- Creation of a Division would be justified if the workload of the Divisional Superintendent of RMS calculation in terms of co-efficient works out to 1.00 or more;
- Post of Assistant Superintendent of RMS would be justified to assist the Superintendent of RMS when the workload in terms of these co-efficients exceeds 1.3;-A post of Deputy Superintendent in addition to the Assistant Superintendent of RMS would be justified in a Division when the workload in terms of co-efficient works out to 2.45 or more; and - The Division

would justify bifurcation if the workload exceeds 2.9, if practicable and administratively convenient.

#### **RMS Divisions - Status**

##### **All Divisions where:**

- there is a Deputy Superintendent in the Division or in the Divisional Offices; or
- the number of Sorters including the LSG, HSG, and Time Scale Clerks exceeds 450; should be in Class I, and all others in Class II.

#### **Director of Postal Services**

The following shall be considered as a measuring Unit:

- Postal Division;
- RMS Division;
- Postal Store Depot;
- First Class Head Post Office directly under the Head of Circle; and
- Mail Motor Service under the charge of a Manager and directly under the Head of the Circle.

#### **Standard: Postal Stamp Depot**

One Director for 12 such units.

The first post of Director when the ... 11  
number of such Unit is

Second Post ... 16 or more

Third Post ... 28 or more

Fourth Post ... 40 or more

After giving a brief overview of the field set-up, it is relevant to point out some significant parameters of the postal operations having bearing on the organizational aspects:

- The Indian Postal System does have many of the characteristics of a business and, in fact, is expected to perform its functions in a business like manner. However, important policy decisions in matters of personnel, tariff etc. are largely in the hands of the institutions outside the organization.

In the working of the postal system one important point which needs emphasis, concerns the existence of a large number of departmental manuals covering almost all the functional aspects of the department. These manuals numbering approximately 15, covering each aspect separately provide by and large, personnel duties, responsibilities, relationship with other functionaries and above all it provides in great detail the postal operations necessary on each aspect alongwith the procedure to achieve them. These manuals take into consideration a large number of conceivable situations alongwith the decision making powers and the degree of latitude and interpretation available to each functionary. As a matter of fact, it is only due to the existence of these manuals, in the postal system, a large degree of decision making has been centralised. It is because of these manuals as they provide norms, standards and criteria that the postal administration in the country has been able to provide a uniform treatment of its functions in the entire length and breadth of the country. Again due to these manuals, it is possible to supervise and control an organizational which is largely labour intensive with comparatively handful of supervisory staff.

The postal operations do not require any degree of expertise and specialisation but due to historical reasons in the lower echelons there have been segregation of cadres resulting in some specialization in the major wings of the postal administration.

The processes involved in providing the postal services are predominantly of a manual and clerical nature. Besides, the groups of services provided by the post office entail fairly large scale operations in themselves. Almost all the services provided are carried out at the post office counters.

The most distinctive feature of the postal organization is the extent to which it is broken down geographically. Another feature of general interest concerns the broad division into levels of authority. The supervisory organization comprises of postal and RMS Divisions while controlling organization consists of regions and circles. By and large, circle level set-up correspond to geographical boundaries of the States. However, postal regions and postal divisions do not correspond to the revenue districts and revenue divisions.

The Post Office is a public organization whose activities are more amenable to public scrutiny than many other Government departments.

### DYSFUNCTIONALITIES IN THE FIELD SET-UP

For an understanding of the dysfunctionalities in the field set-up it is necessary to have a brief overview of the States of the Indian Union and its field unit of administration within which the postal system functions for achieving its basic objectives. In India, the States vary in area, population and degree of urbanisation. As a matter of fact, one could divide these States in four parts; major, medium, small and tiny (Annexure XIII). The most industrialised States of Maharashtra, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu are now well over 30 percent urbanised. There is a wide variation in the field of urbanization between the different States and also between the districts in each State. The basic unit of State administration is a revenue district which seeks to establish the proper relationship of different aspects (law and order, revenue, economic and social development), including the lines of control and accountability. The district administration also serves as a unit of planning for almost all the major areas of social and economic development. The revenue district vary in area and population and degree of urbanisation (Annexures XIV and XV). However, from the postal administration point of view the two points of constant interaction are the State headquarter and as the headquarter of the revenue district. Both these, provide the focal points for bringing about necessary coordination in the effective functioning of the postal system.

The organisational structure of the Indian Postal System as briefly described in the preceding section has developed in its present form over a period of more than 134 years. With the advent of planning came expansion of facilities and the entire country had come under Postal Service by 1966 with the total elimination of 'No-Dak Villages'. The multi-level decision making structure of the Indian Postal System remained basically 5-tier up to March 1979. From April 1979 a new tier of Regional Director was also added. The other new dimension has been the introduction District pattern of sorting in 1983. Recently in big circles independent PMsG have been assigned territorial jurisdictions.

However, expansion in postal facilities and increase in volume of traffic also brought complexity in efficient operation of the postal system. This is not alone due to the increasing demand which is being put on the system but is also because of the fact that a number of distortions have cropped up in the field set-up. It is now proposed to identify these dysfunctionalities in the organisational structure of the postal field set-up.

#### Postal Branch

A Head Postal Office is distinct from a Sub-Office because of the following features:

- It provides certain additional facilities to the public.
- It exercises accounting control over Sub-Offices and gives instructions for the regulation of their transactions.

- It consolidates its own transactions and those of Sub-Offices and Branch Offices and reports to postal Accounts Office.
- It is also a drawing and disbursing office for the pay and allowance of the postal staff.

Annexure V provides detail of Postal Division, Sub-Divisions, different categories of Post Offices, strength of Group 'C' and 'D', volume of traffic etc. in the Circles as on 31.3.1987. The existing parameters for the norms of creation of a Head Post Office is the number of Sub-Post Offices placed in its accounts jurisdiction. The application of the norms has resulted in number of dysfunctionalities as revealed by the 'Report on Work Study for revision of norms for creation of Head Post Offices' 1987-88. The growth of the head offices has not been uniform in different Circles though the standard is the same for creation/upgradation of head offices. This is due to the fact that every Circle adopts its own yardstick in revision of establishment. For instance, Andhra Circle has created as many as 106 HOs with 2470 Sub-Offices including 70 Extra Departmental Sub-Offices on the sole criterion of numerical strength of office and consequently largest number of HOs have come up in that Circle. But this is not so in respect of other Circles. In Tamil Nadu Circle though the number of SOs is 3018 (including 236 Extra Departmental Sub-Offices) the number of HOs is as low as 92. Similarly in Uttar Pradesh Circle number of Departmental and Extra Departmental SOs is 2679 and 511 respectively (totalling 3211 - highest in the country) but the number of HOs is only 85. Evidently these Circles adopted different yardsticks for creation of HOs. In this connection, it is worthwhile to mention that traffic growth in the above mentioned Circles differs and lowest traffic is of Andhra Pradesh. Number of HOs in Maharashtra is also surprisingly lower than that of Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. In West Bengal total number of HOs is even lower than half of Andhra, but traffic handled is more than that of latter. Similarly, in comparison to other Circles - Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, its traffic is larger but number of HOs is less.

Further a comparison of Postal Divisions/Sub-Divisions vis-a-vis the staff strength of Group 'C' and 'D' in some Circles (Annexure V) revealed for example that Andhra Pradesh has got highest number of Divisions as well as Sub-Division (205) i.e. almost double that of West Bengal, though traffic handled is lower than that of latter. The creation of largest number of Divisions in Andhra Pradesh has become possible as its creation is largely linked with numerical strength of HOs. Number of regional offices both in West Bengal and Andhra are the same. Again, in Rajasthan the number of Postal Divisions is almost equal to that of West Bengal but its traffic is half of latter. In Maharashtra, number of Postal Divisions is lower than that of Andhra and Tamil Nadu. This clearly indicates that with the



increase of HOs overhead expenditure on administration has increased considerably and unnecessarily in certain Circles. The creation of a large number of HOs had become possible in certain Circles as the standard is not linked with traffic and staff strength of office. Existing norms for creation of Divisions and post of Director are quite defective. It is of utmost necessity to check the growth of HOs so that expenditure on administration is not increased unnecessarily.

- It has been reported that in 14 Circles about 20% of offices were opened in relaxation of existing standards while remaining offices satisfy existing some except a few which have been created without any Sub-Offices in accounts jurisdiction.
- It is evident from Table V that not only all the district headquarters have Head Offices, but they are also located in Sub-Division and Tehsil headquarters too. With the expansion of banking facilities both in urban, rural and backward areas, Sub-Offices do not find any difficulty to draw and remit cash from and to bank. In the present context, the creation of Head Offices for purpose of financing Sub-Offices is no longer necessary.

It is apparent that the norms for sanctioning the additional Head Offices in the District should be based on quantifiable parameters which reflect the work load of the Head Office as faithfully as possible. There is also a need to improve the status of the Head Postmaster. It will be in the fitness of things if the Head Postmaster is vested with necessary administrative and financial powers to take decisions so as to improve the operational efficiency of the Postal System.

In the functioning of the postal administration, there are certain operations necessary for achieving the basic objective of the postal system. These operations consist of: transactions at the counters, collection of postal articles, handling, sorting, transmission and delivery. As a matter of fact, except for the transactions at the counters the other operations must move in tandem i.e. the work performed by one depends on the succeeding operations for its successful and efficient completion. In this sense, the postal activities are integrated operations. The postal divisions are basically the supervisory agencies to bring about such an integration. However, the field situation is totally different. At the divisional level, one sees multiplicity of authority in the operational sense of the term. In all the Circles, Mail Motor Service, notably at the Circle headquarters and in some other important towns are directly under the control of the respective Postmasters General. Similarly, first class independent Head Post Offices are also under the Postmasters General. Besides, RMS Divisions and Postal Divisions are under different functionaries. As a result

of this, there is a lack of adequate coordination on the one hand and diffusion of responsibilities on the other.

Due to the existing norms for the creation of a postal division a number of revenue districts are having between 2 to 5 postal divisions. Annexure VI gives a detailed information regarding such revenue districts. For example, there are 50 revenue districts having 2 postal divisions, 22 revenue districts having 3 postal divisions, 3 revenue districts having 4 postal divisions and 1 revenue district having 5 postal divisions. In all there are 76 revenue districts having between 2 to 5 postal divisions. Due to the multiplicity of postal divisions, in such districts, each Postal Superintendent is dependent on the other for some aspect of the postal operations in his area. This is a direct consequence of the existing norms mentioned above. Besides, due to this bifurcation and upgradation the divisions are hardly stabilised.

In the past, the Divisions were organised in such a manner as to be coterminous with the district boundaries. Sometimes a Postal Division comprised post offices within two or more revenue districts, but in no case was part of one district within one postal division and another part within a separate postal division. This organisational pattern was given up under the impact of increasing traffic. This along with the standards laid-down for the creation of divisions has resulted in post offices within a particular district being grouped into two or more Divisions Class I or Class II. This is an unsatisfactory arrangements. In the face of a traffic which shows signs of continuous increase, there is every likelihood of there being too many postal Divisions in the country. This is a kind of fragmentation which is not conducive to effective supervision at the Circle level.

The analysis provided above calls for the acceptance of the fact that a revenue district should be taken as one undivisible postal division. This calls for the need for organising the existing divisions into district charges. It would also imply splitting up of multi-district divisions and also where 2 to 5 postal divisions are existing the districts will have to be merged into a single postal division. At present, there are 116 revenue districts having no independent postal divisions (Annexure VII).

There is also a need to evolve a norm for the status and the level of the divisional Superintendent based on the criteria other than the existing one. This criteria could be based on the volume of traffic but the volume of traffic is capable of being manipulated and tampered with. As a matter of fact, it does not represent a true indicator of the postal activity in a division. The other criteria could be 'total cash receipts' of a postal division. The 'total cash receipts' of the Head Post Offices in a Division reflect the volume of the total business. This will vary from place to place, depending upon the level of urbanisation

and industrialisation of a division. The 'total cash receipts' include both the money received by the post offices in lieu of the transactions from the public as well as the money taken by the post offices from the treasuries for effecting these transactions. In this connection, it has to be clarified that the existing norms for various items of work in the postal divisions should be continued to be followed but the status of the Head of the Division should be determined on the basis of the 'total annual cash receipts'.

Directors of Postal Services are responsible for the running of the services within their Regions. They have the administrative powers exercised by the Postmaster General subject of course to the overall superintendence of the PMG. They are to look after postings and transfers upto LSG and IPO level within the Region. However, DPC meetings for Circle cadres are continued to be held at Circle level and initial postings to Circle cadres are made by Circle offices. Thus Circle cadres continue to remain as they were. Inter-regional transfers are approved by the PMG. The Regional Directors are fully responsible for complaints, investigations, vigilance (upto non-gazetted level), mail arrangements, postal operations, postal planning, inspections, maintenance and repairs to buildings, budgeting, public relations and staff relations in their respective areas. The Postmaster General retains the coordinating role for budgeting, planning, vigilance, investigation, staff relations, public relations, liaison with the State Government and are ultimately responsible for the efficient functioning of the services in the entire Circle, with the various regions reporting to him.

The Scheme has led to certain amount of duality in control and consequent friction. According to the Schedule of Administrative powers, the DPS is the appointing authority for the staff in the higher and lower selection grade. In the pre-regionalisation set-up, all matters relating to selection, posting and transfers of the staff in the selection grade, both higher and lower and SDPs, the Directors-in-charge of the concerned region has the final say, subject of course to the overall direction of policy by the PMG. Under the revised scheme, the powers relating to selection and initial posting of Circle cadres have not been vested with the Regional Directors and are exercised by the Director (Hq.) attached to the office of the PMG. Quite often, due to the communication gap between the Director (Hq.) in Circle Office and the Regional Directors away from the Circle Headquarters, and on occasions unfortunately due to lack of adequate personal equation, the Regional Directors are seldom, if ever, consulted in these matters leading to administrative difficulties and friction.

The other ostensible purpose for which the regionalisation scheme was implemented, namely, speeding up decision-making and implementation of various plan programmes, etc. is frustrated by the insistence that all proposals involving the sanction of departmental posts or which the concurrence of the IFA was originally necessary under

the pre-regionalisation scheme, are continued to be vested and concurred by the IFA of the PMG. When the scheme was introduced in April 1979, the Accounts Officers attached to the Regional Directorates were to function as IFA for the RD. This was, however, rescinded by the Directorate in March 1980. The difficulties in the Regional Directorates situated at stations away from the Circle headquarters getting the approval of the IFA sustained at Circle headquarters are obvious.

This apart, the Regional Directorates have come to be reckoned by the Circle Offices as yet another tier in the administrative line up. Even in matters which call for review at the level of Circle Offices, the Regional Directorates are required to review the cases and furnish a certificate as to the correctness of the returns, based on which the Circle Office in-turn furnishes a certificate to the Directorate. For instance, the quarterly returns of outstandings SB, CTD claims, etc., are submitted both to the Regional Directorates and to the Circle Offices. The Circle Office has prescribed that a certificate should be furnished by the Regional Directorates that the reasons for the delay in the settlement of the claims are satisfactory and based on these certificates, the Circle Office in-turn submits a certificate to the Directorate. This may be an individual case of aberration on the part of a particular Circle Office but it gives an idea of the thinking on the part of Circle Office and of the trend towards Regional Directorates Divisional Offices and Circle Offices.

There is considerable duplication of work as between the Circle Offices and the Regional Directorates. For instance, proposals for the review of establishment upto the level of Clerks are processed and sanctioned by the Regional Directors, but posts of LSG and of higher level have to be sanctioned by Circle Office though the basic data for the sanction of posts of LSG and above is related to the operative workload which is scrutinised and vetted by the Regional Directors for sanction of operative posts in the Time-scale. The present apportionment of work connected with the sanctioning of posts of LSG and HSG/I, ASP, HSG/II to Circle Offices results in duplication of work.

The staff support for the Regional Directors is bound by diversion of UDCs and LDCs from Circle Offices. Under the very scheme of things, a Dealing Assistance in Circle Office is not able to acquire knowledge of the working of all the different branches. Circle Offices being larger establishments, it is possible for Dealing Assistants in Circle Offices to deal with a particular subject exclusively and acquired considerably in-depth knowledge and proficiency. The Regional Directorates on the other hand have been sanctioned on ad-hoc basis limited staff support comprising of 8 to 12 Clerks. These posts are manned by Jr. UDCs and LDCs, who have been rendered surplus in Circle Offices consequent on the transfer of a corresponding number of posts from the Circle Office. These junior officials with the very little experience acquired during their short service in Circle Office

are ill-equipped to handle effectively the different branches that are assigned to them in the Regional Directorates.

The declared purpose of the scheme was to give the entire set-up a field orientation. This objective is not fulfilled by the scheme as conceived and implemented, since the Regional Directorates constitute separate entities apart from the field formations. For all intents and purposes the Regional Directorates function as mini-Circle Offices with all the advantages and the deficiencies found in the Circle set-up. The mere constitution of Regional Directorates in important towns away from the Circle Headquarters has not by itself lent them field orientation.

The Postal Department has used its standards and norms for creation of bifurcation head post offices and divisions in a manner which has led in the expansion in the number head post offices on the one hand and bifurcation of divisions on the other. It has also over a period of last 10 years, in order to decentralise and control the operations followed a policy of sending the JAG senior officials into postal regions. Recently in some of the bigger circles Postmaster General have been given distinct areas of responsibility. This type of decentralisation neither will solve the problems nor it will bring efficiency in the postal operations. The nature of postal functions are distinctively different from that of other public utility service organisations. It should be remembered that postal operations require a high degree of managerial competence in the operational areas i.e. at the Head Post Office level and at the divisional levels.

By and large, the postal divisions should be coterminous with a revenue district. Frequent bifurcations of the postal divisions brings in its wake numerous administrative problems arising out of staff allocation, and transfer of personnel, records, re-arranging of seniority list etc. There is a considerable wastage of manpower due to prolonged correspondence on staff representations. In fact, the expenditure involved in bifurcating and creating a new division is more as compared to upgradation of the management status. The postal division should not be bifurcated due to increase in work load. Instead of periodical upgradation of the management level should be assigned to. The upgradation of the management of postal division from JTS to STS to JAG to SAG level officers should be based on the norms to be decided, after a study of total cash receipts of the postal divisions in the country over the last five years. The financial and administrative power of the postal division incumbent should be the same as already laid down. Whatever be the level of the incumbent of the postal divisions they will report to the Head of the Circle, who will be responsible for overall performance of services in the Circle including operation, maintenance, public relations, recruitment of Circle cadre staff, planning and development, liaison with State Government and Directorate etc.

The acceptance of the criteria mentioned above will also obviate the bifurcation of the postal circles. As mentioned in the beginning, by and large, the postal set-up at the Divisional and Circle levels should coterminous with revenue districts on the one hand and that of the States on the other.

## **RAILWAY MAIL SERVICE BRANCH**

### **Sorting Arrangements**

A qualitative change has taken place in the RMS set-up as a result of the policy decision taken in March 1983 to abolish sorting in running sections. Besides Air Concentration Centres were also identified in each Circle as a major mail offices. Before the introduction of District pattern of sorting, a policy decision was taken in December 1981 to carry out preliminary sorting in the post offices to relieve the Railway Mail Service Branch of its peak hour problem and to eliminate rehandling of mail to a large extent. Subsequently in September 1982, it was decided that preliminary sorting would be done by a smaller post offices for 25 selections and by larger post offices and head post offices for 52 to 72 selections. An important assumption in this change was the recognition of the fact that each handling per mail office would normally account for one day towards transit time. Articles within the town/city should be delivered at the latest on the following day of posting. Articles within the district would require only one handling. Articles for the neighbouring districts and for destinations within the State would require a maximum of two handlings. Articles from one State to another except neighbouring States may require three handlings. Articles between metropolitan cities should normally be delivered next day, as they are required to do detailed sorting for each other. This applies of course to first class mails only. On the basis of the studies conducted by the Department recently it was revealed that a letter in a sorting office requires a maximum of 1.8 handlings. This is further based on the assumption that 40 percent of the mail go to direct selections involving one handling, another 40 percent to district sorting centres involving two handlings and the balance 20 percent to Concentration Centres in other Circles involving three handlings.

It was a well known fact that the time taken for delivering the mail is the main parameter for assessing the efficiency of the postal operations. However, it was observed in a report prepared by the Directorate in 1988, on the basis of test letters posted by the Circles to monitor transmission and delivery of postal mails that in 17 units the percentage of delivery of mail as per the norms was below 50. This is quite high percentage of delay in delivery of mails.

A number of problems have cropped up with the introduction of District pattern of sorting because the structural and administrative arrangements have not been carried out as needed in the changed setting. Some of the dysfunctionalities in the existing sorting

arrangements are given below:

- It was observed in a recent Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India, that the handling rate in 10 units of four Circles (Delhi, Gujarat, Maharashtra and West Bengal) ranged between 2.01 and 3.38 during the year 1987. It was further pointed out that the excess handling over the prescribed norm varied from 12 to 87 percent resulting not only increased in operating cost but also delay in delivery of mail.
- It was also observed that preliminary sorting was not introduced in all post offices in Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal Circles and some post offices in Maharashtra, Delhi, Orissa and Kerala Circles. One important consequence of the absence of preliminary sorting had been that such offices were dumping the mail resulting in peak hour the problem in mail offices and subsequent delay in transmission and delivery. It was also pointed out that in some post offices of Andhra Pradesh Circle the preliminary sorting was not done properly, i.e. where post offices were closing mixed up mails without preparing justified labelled bundles and a separation of town delivery mails.
- It was further observed that this practice of dumping of mails was not confined to the post office alone. It was revealed that mail offices were also indulging in this practice, i.e. without sorting justified labelled bundles. It was commented that in Andhra Pradesh Circle mails intended for other Circles like Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka were received at Hyderabad from mail offices in Northern, Western and Eastern Centres frequently. Similarly, some mail offices in Maharashtra, Karnataka and Kerala Circles were dumping the mails to other mail offices involving extra handling and delay in transmission.
- At present, the Regional Concentration Centres are supposed to do detailed sorting for the districts for which they are the Concentration Centre. But in practice, these centres are performing sorting work district mail-wise only. This means that the mails for X district goes to a particular mail office meant for district X which is again performing detailed sorting for their district. Moreover, the Head Post Offices are also performing the sorting work in their Sub-Offices in respect of the articles meant for those Sub-Offices.
- The supervisory staff available in the sorting offices are enable to exercise effective control over the staff. Firstly, they do not have any



administrative/statutory powers and secondly even those who have these powers do not want to exercise it for variety of reasons.

Due to the introduction of District pattern of sorting, there is no need to keep sorting work with the RMS. All the Head Post Offices should also work as district sorting offices for inward and intra-Circle outward mail, i.e. outward mail for other district sorting offices within the Circle and also outward mail for other Circles too. There will be curtailment in closing of bags as all the Head Post Offices are already closing bags for their Sub-Offices. The sorting of inward Circles will be consigned in these bags used for closing separate bags. In this process, the District sorting office will be actually merged with the Head Post Offices. In operational terms, it requires merging of the Postal Assistants and Sorting Assistants cadres for bringing about total integration of the operations, and placing the mail offices at the district headquarters under the Divisional Superintendent/Senior Superintendent of Post Offices.

#### Mail Transmission

The defects in the existing RMS field set-up from the point of view of transmission of mail are given below:

- The Heads of the Circles are expected to be responsible for the efficient mail operations in their Circles. However, in the existing set-up the powers of the Heads of the Circles are very limited. For example, they do not have power to reorganise mail offices, beats and transit sections. Such powers have now been centralised in the Directorate. As a matter of fact in the present set-up of mail operations, the Directorate is getting involved itself into day-to-day operations matters which are within the competence of heads of the circles.
- In the establishment of the RMS Divisions, it is not the flow of traffic but the number of record offices which are taken into consideration as a consequence of this RMS Divisions are not coterminous with the Railway Divisions.
- The boundaries of RMS are arbitrarily organised to make them coterminous with Circle jurisdiction.
- There was lack of coordination on vital matters of transmission of mail between circles on the one hand and Railway authorities on the other.
- Time-table changes had to be worked out by more than one Circle.
- The same cases had to be discussed with the Railway Administration by more than one Circle.



- RMS set-up seldom received proper attention from the officers in the Circle office.
- The Director (Mail Planning Operations) are stationed at metropolitan towns, Delhi, Calcutta, Bombay and Madras to supervise and monitor the operational activities and review the mail arrangements of different regions. It was observed that these functionaries are unable to fulfil their responsibilities as their command area is too large to give individual attention to the problems; they are also not being provided with any technical assistance to do such type of work.

It will not be out of place to mention that the question of a separate wing for postal transmission or there should be a single unit of postal administration was discussed and enquired a number of times. In this connection, it is worthwhile to point out that until 1927, the Railway Mail Service was a separate unit of the postal administration. The field set-up of the RMS until 1927 was looked after by three Deputy Postmasters General with their headquarters at Ambala, Calcutta and Pune. However, the Posts and Telegraphs Department Committee 1924-25 advocated for the integration of the postal and RMS branches. The reasons advocated for amalgamating the two branches primarily related to:

- To bring about complete coordination and unison in the functioning of the postal operations.
- Friction which exist in the two branches will be lessened.
- It was also felt that since the RMS set-up at the field is looked after by officers lower in rank than the PMG and as a consequence, their suggestions received less weightage with the Directorate.

As a result of the recommendations of this Committee, the Railway Mail Service was placed under the Postmasters General of Circles as a part and parcel of the postal administration.

However, the Postal Inquiry Committee of 1934-35 reviewed this matter. The mail argument advocated by this Committee was that the amalgamation of the RMS and postal branches failed to rectify the defects. Although, the friction between the two branches had been eliminated but at the cost of efficiency. This Committee pointed out some inherent defects in postal circles looking after RMS work.

- The beats of RMS sections were arbitrarily curtailed to make them coterminous with Circle boundaries;
- There was lack of coordination between Circle.

This question was again deliberated by the RMS Committee (1958), they observed that the defects pointed out by the Postal Enquiry Committee (1934-35) were true even today and as a consequence the system of unified postal administration had not worked well. The main arguments advanced by this Committee relate to the fact that the postal Circles were not in a position to give qualified and specialised attention which RMS requires. This Committee recommended separation of postal and RMS branches and also advocated that the RMS branch should be organised on a territorial basis with headquarters at Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras each under the charge of an officer in the Senior Administrative Grade.

As mentioned earlier, in the efficient functioning of the postal system, the Railway network still constitutes the backbone. If we want to develop a perspective not only for the optimum use of the Railways but also in effective coordination of day-to-day problems of transmission, train timing, provision of accommodation in Railway Stations for RMS offices, facilities in Railway Stations for the efficient working of the RMS, provision of mail-van accommodation etc. It is necessary that the RMS set-up should be reorganised. As analysed earlier, a qualitative change has taken place with the introduction of District pattern of sorting and it is most logical in the changed situation to amalgamate the sorting work with the postal branch. As far as the transmission of mail is concerned, it is proposed to reorganise the set-up of the RMS in the following directions:

- The RMS should be renamed as Mail Transmission Service (MTS);
- The RMS Divisions should be coterminous with the Railway Divisions. The proposed MTS Divisional Superintendents should be at the same level of status of their counterparts in the Railway Divisions.
- At each Railway Zone headquarters JAG (senior grade) level officials should be posted to perform the functions at present looked after by the Postmasters General. This arrangement will on the one hand make a senior level official of the Postal Department responsible to coordinate with the Railway authorities regarding transmission of mail and it will free the Heads of the Circles from this task and they can devote more time to the efficient and effective use of the road transport system which has over the years developed a great deal. The road transport system has become all

the more important with the expansion of postal facilities in the rural areas.

- The proposed set-up of the MTS also envisages establishment of an agency in which metropolitan towns like Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras so as to control, regulate and coordinate the mail operations. These metro-towns are important from the postal point of view, because a large volume of mail originates as well as terminates in these towns. Besides, these towns also serve as a large distribution centres of mail. These towns are also focal points of air and railway networks. It should be headed by an official of SAG rank. This authority could be called General Manager (MTS). The existing 9 Railway Zones located in North East, South and West should be clubbed on the principle of proximity and the Directors envisaged at the Zonal level should report to the General Manager (MTS). Similar analogy will prevail for the MTS Divisions also. The proposed set-up of MTS is given below:

General Manager (MTS)	Reporting Directors (MTS)	Divisions (MTS)
Bombay	Central Railway Western Railway	14
Calcutta	Eastern Railway North East Frontier	9
Delhi	Northern Railway North Eastern	12
Madras	Southern Railway South Central Railway South Eastern	19
		----- 54 -----

In the existing field set-up of the RMS with the Directorate divesting a large part of the responsibilities as well as the fact that in the set-up, it is difficult for the Heads of the Circles to solve the operational problems, it is all the more necessary to create a separate hierarchy for the mail transmission. The proposed MTS set-up as envisaged above is organised on the territorial basis.

## CHAPTER 4

### PERSONNEL POLICIES

This chapter attempts to examine the overall pattern of postal employment covering; (a) Recruitment, (b) Training, (c) Placement/Transfer Policies; and (d) Scope for Development and Growth, with a view to suggesting some changes for improving productivity and employees' job satisfaction.

#### **Some Background Perceptions**

This segment has been identified in the Interim Report of the Expert Committee on Excellence in Postal Services as the most crucial factor for achieving excellence in postal services. In their own words:

Increasing consumer satisfaction with the type and quality of service and increasing job satisfaction and productivity of employees are the two most crucial factors for achieving excellence in the post. The former is dependent on the latter.

The Expert Committee has also gleaned the following perceptions about the postal personnel through a multi-pronged survey.

#### **(a) Alienation and Low Morale of Employees**

For a number of years, the employees of the Department who have had a reputation of being honest and service-oriented have gradually developed a sense of alienation. They seem to be getting no satisfaction from the contents and quality of the jobs they are handling. According to the Employees Survey, the major reasons for the low morale and apathy of the workers are, repetitive and routine nature of work, lack of learning opportunities and scope for development, low participation and autonomy and on the whole poor personnel management and human resource development. There is also a feeling that the present reward system in the Department does not create enough motivation among the employees as there is no appreciation or incentive for individual performance.

#### **(b) Postal Managers Devoid of Sufficient Motivation and Drive**

The managers of the Indian Post Office emerged as a very low motivated set of people, without much drive and initiative; lack of direction, purpose, self-esteem and social worth seem to be prevailing amongst a large number of them, leading to a lack-lustre quality of management. The little bit of motivation seen seems to be coming from misplaced sources like promotion and use of control and power. The developmental and result-oriented work ethics are largely not available in the managerial pool. There appears to be very few managers who are seeking solutions to problems and working for improvement of the Department. In their submissions to the Committee, a number of officers stated that the present level of motivation and drive as also managerial style of

the general run of postal managers, are the result of the environment created by the top management in the Department. One middle level officer stated that the Department has great future but it shall have to bring about a lot of attitudinal change, especially at senior management levels.... Present and persistent feeling of demoralization is probably at the back of the current mess we are in. Certain apathy is noticed all along the line which has resulted in a virtual halt to all constructive thinking within the Department. It was also stated that the Department does not provide the right environment, culture and ethics for each one to stretch himself fully. It suffers from its own sloth.

In addition to the above, the following general perceptions also need to be kept in view:

(c) **Service Orientation Nature of the Department of Posts**

The Department of Posts is essentially a service department and it offers immense opportunities of service to the community while it gives to its employees just enough for a simple frugal living. If employees start comparing this department with other organisations like the banks and services like the Indian Administrative Service, the Indian Police, Customs and Income-tax and look for things other than service, like power, glamour, perks, etc., they are bound to be frustrated, demotivated and alienated.

(d) **Immense Scope for Upward Mobility**

The Department of Posts provides considerable scope for upward mobility within the department. A person, joining as an extra-departmental employee in the Department, can become a postman, a postal assistant, and by passing a departmental examination and earning a good record of service, rise upto junior management level. Direct recruits to Indian Postal Service have also reasonable opportunities for promotion, with regular cadre reviews.

(e) **The Image of the Department in the Eyes of the Employees**

The image of the Department of Posts in the eyes of employees themselves is not bright in comparison with other organisations, due to some factors peculiar to the Department like very poor work - environment, long hours of routine type of work, constraints of a very heavy corpus of rules and regulations, stratified procedures, etc.

**Pattern of Postal Employment**

The Department of Posts employs approximately 5,89,043 persons (Figure as on 31.3.1987). They are distributed as under:

Group A and	2,196
Group B	
Group C and	2,89,761
Group D	
Extra Departmental	2,97,086
Employees	

Employees in Group A are deployed in management positions ranging from junior management level (Senior Supdts. of Post Offices, Senior Supdts. of Railway Mail Services, Post Master's Grade-A) to the top management positions (Members of the Postal Services Board); employees in Group B are deployed in junior management positions like Supdts. of Post Offices, Supdts. of RMS, Post Master's groups, Supdts. of Postal Store Depots etc. Group C employees occupy supervisory and operative posts, and inspectorial posts in various postal establishments. Some of these posts like those of Head Postmasters and Sub-divisional charges, have an element of managerial responsibilities. Group-D employees work as Mailmen, Packers, Letter box Peons, etc. The Extra Departmental Employees are deployed as Post Masters of small post offices in rural areas, (EDSPM's/EDBPM's) Delivery Agents, Mail Carriers, Stamp Vendors, etc.

### Recruitment and Promotion

Recruitment and promotion policies of the Department of Posts have some special features, like recruitment of postal and sorting assistants on the basis of marks in XII Class examination, reservation of 50% vacancies in the cadres of assistants and postmen, for departmental candidates of lower cadres, a time bound promotion to the next higher cadre for Group D officials, postmen and mailguards, and assistants and absence of any direct recruitment to supervisory/inspectorial and Group 'B' cadres. Some of these policies have evolved over a number of years after protracted interaction with the Staff Unions. These features have their implications, in terms of calibre and quality of personnel, their morale and motivation and general efficiency of the service.

Bulk of the employees of the Department of Posts are borne on two types or cadres, viz., (a) basic cadres which have an element of direct recruitment and (b) promotion cadres.

The basic cadres are:-

- Indian Postal Service Group A
- Postal Assistants and Sorting Assistants.
- Postmen and Mail Guards.
- Group D Employees.
- Extra Departmental Employees.

The Promotion Cadres are:-

- Postal Supdts. Service Group B (after the merger of Postal Supdts' Service Group B and Post Masters' Service Group B).
- Higher Selection Grade -I
- Assistant Supdts, or Post Office and Assistant Supdts, of RMS.
- Higher Selection Grade-II
- Inspectors of post office and Inspectors of RMS.
- Lower Selection Grade.
- Mail Overseers/Head postmen/sorting Postmen/

- Overseer Postmen.
- Jamadars - Selection grade for Group D.

Among the departmental employees in Group D, there is quite a large number of persons in non-test category, like Chaukidars, Sweepers, Malis, Farashes, etc. In order to become eligible for promotion, they have to get into the test category of Group D by passing a literacy test. There are also a number of casual labourers, part-time casual labourers and some contingency paid staff. Casual labourers are eligible for absorption in Group D. This report does not take into consideration the employees in Control Units like Circle Offices and the Directorate and supporting establishments like postal accounts, civil wing units, store depots, stamp depots, RLOs, etc. , because the cadre controlling authorities in respect of the employees in some of these units are outside the Department and in some units the employees form part of other units like the Postal Division and Circle Office. The employees of Mail Motor Service Units have also not been taken into consideration as no problems affecting them have been raised. The employees working in the medical units have also not been taken into consideration.

The approximate numbers of employees in different cadres (basic and promotion) are shown below:

Indian postal Service Group-A	
and Postmasters Group - A	516
Group 'B' officers	
(PSS & PMS combined)	744
HSG Officials	1,573
Inspectors and Asstt.supts.	4,142
LSG officials	12,456
Postal and Sorting Assistants	1,15,242
Postmen/Mail Guards	61,761
Group 'D' Employees	44,551
ED Employees	2,97,086

#### ED Employee

At the base level we have Extra Departmental Employees i.e. EDSPMs/EDBPMs, ED Stamp Vendors, ED sorters in PSOs, EDDAS, EDMCS, ED Mail Men and ED Packers. Their recruitment is made according to requirements in the concerned Division. The vacancies are notified to the nearest Employment Exchange. If there is no response from the E.E. for 15 days or so, action is taken to put up notice of vacancies in the Post-Offices in the area. At some places announcements are also made through drum beaters. Candidates who come forward are interviewed and further action for recruitment is taken according to rules. The recruiting authority for the EDSPMs, EDBPMs and ED sorting Assistants is the Divisional Supdt. and the minimum educational qualification required is VIII Class with preference for matriculates. The ED stamp vendors and EDDAs' are



recruited by the sub-Divisional Inspectors and educational qualification prescribed for the posts is VI Class (with preference for VIII Class). The other EDA's, recruited by Sub-Divisional Officers, should have knowledge of the regional language and Simple arithmetic. Extra Departmental Employees are eligible for recruitment to regular positions of Group D and postmen and mailguards. According to a note prepared by the Department of Posts, 90% of Group D posts and 50% vacancies of postmen and 25% of mailguards (direct recruitment quota) are taken by them. Since 50% vacancies in the posts of Postal Assistants and Sorting Assistants are reserved for departmental candidates i.e. Postmen and Group D, nearly 50% vacancies in the Assistants' go to them because of heavy dropout of direct recruits and further distribution of resultant vacancies. The cadre of Extra Departmental Employees is, thus, the main feeder to the cadres of Group D, Postmen and Mailguards and 50% vacancies of assistants. The recruitment of extra departmental employees, therefore, calls for special attention so that persons with aptitude for postal services, a proper orientation of service to the community, and merit are inducted into the Department at the level, EDSPM and EDBPMs are incharge of Post Offices in the rural areas and they represent the Department there and perform very important functions. With spread of education in the rural areas, it should be possible to get better qualified persons, preferably matriculates as well as higher secondary school passed people, for these posts and better qualified persons for the posts of other extra departmental posts also, for which the minimum educational qualification of VIII standard should be prescribed. It may be necessary to promulgate more specific guidelines and have wide publicity about the promotional avenues available to the ED employees in the Department, to attract better qualified people. papers on promotional avenues can be distributed to schools in the area. The base which feeds the grass-root departmental cadres of Group D, Postmen and postal and sorting assistants is too large. The Department may also consider employment of teachers, pensioners, ex-servicemen, educated widows of Government servants etc. to curtail the base. This may allow for some more direct recruitment of better qualified persons from outside at the level of Group D and postmen to serve as feeder to the cadre of Assistants.

### **Group D Employees**

Grade D employees in the Department of posts are of two categories, viz., test category and non-test category. Those in the non-test category, have to pass a test to become eligible for promotion to higher cadres along with the test category Group D Employees. All the vacancies of Group D in a recruiting unit are filled up from amongst non-test category Group D, extra departmental agents of the Division (if adequate number of EDAS from within the Division are not available, EDAS of neighbouring divisions are also considered), casual labourers and nominees of the Employment Exchange, in that order. The recruiting authority is the divisional Supdts. and there is a simple qualifying examination. There is no need to keep a separate non-test category of Group D employees, and the category can be abolished. Since Group D and postal and sorting assistants who have to perform very important and complex functions, including public dealings, it is



desirable that the minimum educational qualification for recruitment to Group D posts should be VIII standard as in other Govt. departments. As recommended by Shri R.R. Savoor in his Report on ED system, 50% of Group D vacancies in each recruiting unit should be filled on pure merit in a competitive test, open to all eligible EDAs' and the other 50% on the basis of length of service as EDA and minimum qualifying marks in the test which should be of a higher standard than at present.

### Postmen

The recruitment to the category of postmen is through an examination consisting of 4 papers and the minimum educational qualification is now matriculation or X Class pass. 50% vacancies are reserved for Group D employees of the recruiting units and 50% vacancies for direct recruitment are restricted to extra departmental employees (in the case of mailguards, 25% vacancies are for EDAs' and 75% for Group D). If the requisite number of extra departmental employees within the recruiting unit is not available, nominees of the Employment Exchange are considered for the remaining vacancies. At present, the recruitment of both departmental and extra- departmental candidates is based on length of service and minimum qualifying marks and the standard of examination is very low. The examination for both departmental quota and the direct recruitment quota should be of a higher standard keeping in view the responsibilities of the post and the examination should be competitive and not just qualifying. It should be open to all the eligible and willing candidates in the recruiting unit and selection should be on pure merit.

### Postal and Sorting Assistants

For recruitment to the posts of postal assistants and sorting assistants, 50% vacancies are reserved for departmental candidates of lower cadres i.e. postmen and Group D, and 50 % vacancies are filled up by direct recruitment on the basis of marks obtained by the candidates in the XII class with bonus marks for higher qualifications. It has been seen that candidates with more than 75% marks get selected but about 20% of those selected do not join and about 25% leave the department after joining. A wide disparity in marks of candidates from different areas is also noticed; in some areas mass copying in the examination is reported to be indulged in. Marks in the examination do not therefore provide the real index to the candidates' calibre and competence. There is no minimum educational qualification for departmental candidates. The examination for departmental candidates is conducted by the circle offices and question papers are set by the Postal Directorate. It has been observed that the Assistants joining through the departmental examination which is competitive-cum-qualifying, compare poorly in performance and calibre with the direct recruits. At the level of assistants, certain intellectual calibre and standard of comprehension and capabilities are required to perform complex tasks in various branches of the Post Office both at the counter and behind the counter. One of the reasons why departmental candidates fare poorly and suffer due to certain lack of self-confidence is their low educational qualification. It should, therefore, be considered if a minimum educational qualification of at least 10th pass is prescribed for departmental candidates. It has also

been pointed out that the examination for departmental Candidates which consists of papers in English Essay, simple arithmetic and departmental subjects does not really test the capability of the candidate for the requirements of higher job responsibilities. It is, therefore, suggested that taking into account the job requirements at this level and the need to assess aptitude and service orientation of the candidates, a common test for both departmental candidates and outsiders should be designed by a competent authority like the Staff Selection Commission and the recruitment should also be made by staff Selection Commission. The Department should provide opportunities to the postmen/mailguards, Group D employees and ED employees to improve their departmental knowledge, with specially prepared audio cassettes and training handbooks to be available from PTC's and their educational qualifications while in service by offering incentives and facilities. Correspondence courses are now available and those desirous of seeking promotion to higher posts should be able to improve their educational qualification even after entering the service. It would also be helpful if recruitment of outside candidates and departmental candidates is made against 50% posts and not 50% vacancies as at present.

There is no direct recruitment for supervisory and inspectorial posts and group B posts in the Department. It is, therefore, all the more necessary that the recruitment at the level of assistants who go up to the posts of supervisors, inspectors and even Group B officers should be very strict and careful.

### **Inspectors**

The cadre of inspectors of Post Offices, is very important cadre. It serves as a bridge between the operative cadets and managerial cadets and curtailment of promotion prospects of this cadre has adversely affected the morale of members of this cadre. There is a very strong case for improving the pay-scales of this cadre but the Pay Commission did not agree to the improvement of the scale because there was no direct recruitment to this cadre as in equivalent cadres in other departments of the Central Government. The Inspectors Cadre is not so attractive any more and less and less number of people take the examination. The prospects in the general line cadre have improved considerably. The Department must improve the pay scale by introducing direct recruitment element as suggested by the IV Central Pay Commission. A cadre review to provide for adequate number of posts in the cadre and higher promotional posts should be carried out simultaneous with introduction of an element or direct recruitment to this cadre. Direct recruitment to the extent of 25% in the cadre of inspectors with a minimum educational qualification of BA/B.Sc. Degree should be all right. The remaining 75% vacancies should be filled up under the existing system. Age relaxation upto 35 years can be given to the departmental candidates to compete for the direct recruitment quota posts also.

### **Indian Postal Service Group A**

Recruitment to the Indian postal Service Group A is made through the Union Public Service Commission Civil Service Examination to the extent of 60% vacancies in the Cadre.

40% vacancies are filled up by promotion from Group B officers of the Department. The selection for the departmental quota is by a DPC and the condition for promotion is three years service in Group B. The ratio as between direct recruitment and departmental promotion to Group A should be changed to 50:50. The selection at this stage should be made more rigorous. The recruitment of the departmental candidates should be against posts and not vacancies; and the promotion should be to the senior-time scale of the service and not to the junior-time scale posts as these posts are basically intended to be training posts for Group A officers.

### Promotion Cadres

The Department has adopted the principle of first time bound promotion after 16 years for Group D employees, postmen, and postal and sorting assistants. Thus Group D employees get promoted to the Selection Grade of Group D, postmen and mailguards get promoted to the selection grade of their respective cadres and postal assistants and sorting assistants get promoted to the lower selection grade after 16 years of service in the grade. For postal assistants and sorting assistants one avenue of promotion is the general line promotion i.e. LSG and HSG II and some posts reserved in HSG I. Another avenue of promotion available to them is through a tough competitive examination to the line of inspectors of post offices and RMS and Assistants Supdts. of Post Offices and RMS. Posts in HSG I are shared by the inspectorial line and the general line as prescribed by the Department. A third avenue of promotion available is to the accounts line through an examination for promotion in that line. The present system of promotion appears to be all right. A fourth avenue should be provided to the very bright and intelligent young assistants for promotion to some selected LSG posts through a limited competitive examination. The LSG promotion has now become automatic with completion of 16 years' service in the assistants' grade. It is necessary to build an adequate incentive system for bright assistants to move up quickly to higher positions. The number of posts of Inspectors, Accountants for which competitive examinations are there, are too few. The posts for which an examination is proposed can be identified e.g. posts of PRI's, postmasters, etc., which carry higher responsibilities and challenges in the job. An upper age limit of 35 years and a maximum of 3 chances should govern the admission to the examination.

### PSS Group B

The two cadres of Postal Supdts. Service Group B and Post Masters' Service Group B have recently been merged. Six percent of the total posts have been reserved for general line officials through a limited competitive examination and 94% posts go to the inspectorial cadres. Officers in PSS Group B are at junior management level. The question papers prescribed for the limited competitive examination for promotion of general line officials i.e. HSG and LSG officials consist of 4 papers, 3 of which are from departmental manuals and rules and regulations, with the 4th in general knowledge, all with the aid of books. This examination is not adequate to assess the suitability of officials for managerial posts. The standard of the examination is also lower than the standard of IPO's/IRM's examination.

While the inspectors acquire some experience in their inspectorial duties in areas of man management, investigation; complexities of postal/mail operations, the experience of the general line officials in managing affairs is comparatively limited. It is, therefore, necessary that the examination should be patterned on totally different lines to get the best people for the junior managerial positions in the department. The test should be designed in consultation with the UPSC/SSC and keeping in view the managerial responsibilities and functions of the posts in Group B, it could also include an interview. The Department can organise coaching classes and supply of coaching materials for those taking the examination.

People are getting promoted/selected to PSS Group B at a rather late age. There is a need to set some element of younger people into this cadre and also to provide a fast channel of promotion to bright and promising postal/sorting assistants to retain them in the Department. It is, therefore, suggested that a certain number of posts in Group B should be filled by a competitive examination open to assistants and other promotional cadres with the lower age limit say, 35 years. The proportion of 94% for inspectors line and 6% for general line under the existing arrangement, may be reviewed and revised in consultation with the Staff Unions, to 90% for inspectors' line, 5% for general line selection grade officials and 5% through the proposed competitive examination for assistants upto the age limit of 35 years. The number of posts at this level needs to be increased as a result of cadre review so that the total number of posts available to general line officials and inspectors and assistant-superintendents does not get reduced.

### Training

Training is the most important means of imparting knowledge, skills and understanding, to the employees to enable them to discharge their duties with competence and efficiency, to get satisfaction in the job for themselves and give satisfaction to those whom they serve, and in the process, develop a sense of belonging to the department and pride in the service. It is, however, observed that the training effort of the Department has not been adequate to the requirements. The expenditure on training is barely 0.25% of the wage bill compared to more than 1% in more advanced countries. The approach to training is not well coordinated and geared to any meaningful manpower planning and human resource development and career development planning. There are gaps and lacunae and even a certain lopsidedness in the training now being imparted. The realization of importance of training has been rather slow and implementation of proposals to improve the situation hesitant, half-hearted and ad-hoc. In the induction training to postal assistants and sorting assistants; for example, the instructor: trainee ratio is 1:35 and a proposal to change it to 1:20 against 1:15 considered desirable, has not been approved due to financial implications. Some forward looking, research-oriented Principals of Postal Training Centres have identified gaps/lacunae in training and submitted proposals over the past few years but no action on them has been taken. Recommendations of a seminar and training conferences on the subject have not been implemented. If deficiencies in postal personnel both at the managerial level and supervisory and operative levels, thrown up by the survey conducted

by the expert committee on postal excellence, have to be rectified and if excellence in postal services is to be achieved, much more will need to be done than what has been done so far.

At present there is a part time Deputy Director General (Training) in the Postal Services Directorate to deal with cases relating to training at the Directorate level, an under staffed Postal Staff College for training of Postal managers without a campus of its own, managing in inadequate splintered accommodation, and five regional Postal Training Centres meant for training of operatives supervisors and postal managers Group 'B'.

### **Postal Staff College and Management Training**

Recommendations for setting up a P&T Management College and Postal Research Centre were first made in 1971 in the Report on 'Management Training in U.K., U.S.A., and Netherlands made by Shri Shiva Nath in 1971. Then in 1975 an Informal Group on Training Research and Development for Officers of the Postal Wing of the P&T Department consisting of Shri R.N. Haldipur, then Joint secretary (Training), Department of Personnel, Prof. Ishwar Dayal, Director IIPA, Prof. Nitish De, Director, Indian Labour Institute and Shri Rabi Ray, Senior Member, Postal operations recommended the setting up of an Institute of Postal Research and Training (combining both Training and Research in one institution). The Group envisaged induction training of Officers promoted to Group B or Postal Supdts. Service, by the proposed Institute and gave the details of a suitable programme for them in Appendix A of the Report. Pursuant to these recommendations, the Postal Staff College was established in 1977. In a brochure on objectives and charter of responsibilities of the College, it included, besides programmes for the Officers of Indian Postal Service Group A, a ten-week programme for those promoted to Group B and a two-Week Management Development Programme for Group B officers. It appears that sometime later the training of Group B officers was diverted to Postal Training Centres. A second informal group reviewed the Training situation and made the following recommendations among others:

- (1) There should be an overall training plan for the Department which should lay down strategy in terms of tasks to be accomplished;
- (2) Induction training for probationers of the Indian postal Service should have three modules instead of two;
- (3) Training of officers should have three phases viz., Orientation Stage (during the induction training), Training in functional areas for operational needs and training under areas where individual officers may wish to specialise;
- (4) The Development programmes for officers should be conducted between 7 to 10 years, 17 to 20 years and over 22 years of service in addition to the programmes mentioned above; and .

- (5) Training Institutions should undertake case studies of actual situations to generate discussion on factors responsible for success and those responsible for failures.

The Postal Staff College was intended to be a mix of training and research. But over the years it has not been able to do much in the area of research. The Department has created a separate post of Director, Research and Development outside the College as part of the Directorate of Postal Services under a senior administrative grade officer. A plot of land for the campus of the college was purchased sometime in 1978-79 at Ghaziabad close to the campus of AL TTC and construction of building has been slow to come up. The College at present functions partly in Sanchar Bhawan and partly in Dak Bhavan. The library of the college is housed in a very small room in Dak Bhavan in a very cramped space with no facilities for reading room. There is a building hired for hostel purposes but it is not being properly utilised. The Postal Staff College at present conducts the following programmes.

- (1) Induction Training for probationers of Indian Postal Service and P&T Accounts and Finance Service.
- (2) Executive Development Programme for Officers of Group A.
- (3) Management Development Programme for Officers of Group A.
- (4) Advanced Management Programme for Officers of Group A.
- (5) A Programme for Foreign Trainees.
- (6) Seminars Conferences, Workshops on specific topics.

Lately, the Postal Staff College has started using some cases from the actual field situations, it has yet to develop an infrastructure to develop more and more case studies from the field. Training requires to be matched to field reality and what is taught should help the trainees to cope with field situations. There is no induction at present for Officers of Group B promoted to Group A. These Officers do not also have the benefit of foundational courses which direct recruits to the Indian Postal Services attend. The trainees do not all reside in the hostel and the informal interaction and self-learning among the trainees after classes, do not take place. In order that the Postal Staff College is able to fulfil the objectives for which it was set up, the following steps need to be taken.

- (1) The college should have full infrastructure facilities, i.e., a proper campus, adequate staff, a hostel. The work on campus in Ghaziabad should be expedited and College should shift to that place as early as possible. A small establishment may, however, be retained in Dak Bhavan for seminars and special programmes in which the faculty from the Directorate and other Institutions at Delhi can conveniently participate. For long programmes like the Induction Programme, the college campus is the best place where participants can interact with the faculty away from the work place in a congenial atmosphere and can work out solutions to problems.



- (2) The Research & Development centre should be located in the campus of the Postal Staff college and some satisfactory arrangements should be made to coordinate the activities in Training and Research & Development so that both are mutually supportive. The R&D Wing can then serve as part faculty and be associated in developing new courses.
- (3) The Postal Staff College should take on the induction training of those promoted to Group B and those promoted from Group B to Group A besides training of Accounts Officers of the Postal Wing. The training of P&T Accounts & Finance Service Officers whose cadre is controlled by the Telecommunication Department should be shed off. If necessary, the Postal Staff College can have a small module on the accounts and finance matters relevant to postal services to which these officers can be deputed.
- (4) The Postal Staff College should have a proper training strategy by taking into account the training needs of individual officers and the organizational goals of the Department.
- (5) Programmes of the College should be so designed as to enable the participants to see clearly their role in the Department in relation to its objectives and its total environment, to evaluate their own experience and attitudes and gain insight into their own strengths and weaknesses to assess new knowledge, new techniques and methodologies and their application in their own work situation, to renew their ability to learn, to develop skills of obtaining useful work from a group of people of diverse temperaments and backgrounds, to make changes and resolve conflicts by carrying people along, and to develop professional competence and leadership qualities so that they can inspire and motivate to create high involvement work systems and are able to operate a participative style of management. On the testimony of Director, Postal Staff College, this is being done but under constraints like lack of clarity about objectives, absence of desired cooperation from field and generally unhelpful environment. The Department should address itself to removing such constraints,
- (6) Leadership and technical guidance, role in training in respect of Postal Training Centres, which was envisaged in the original chapter of responsibilities of the Postal Staff College, should be restored to it. Working mechanisms in the shape of annual training conference of Director PSC and Principals PTC's, visits by Principals RTCs to PSC and vice versa can be worked out. All the Training Institutions i.e. the PSC and the PTC's should have a single line communication with the Directorate/Board, the Director PSC now reports to the Secretary Department of Posts and the Principals PTCs report to the DDG(Training) in the Department.

**Postal Training Centres and Training of Supervisors and Operatives**  
**The Postal Training Centres conduct the following programmes.**

- |     |                                                                             |                     |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1.  | Induction courses for postal assistants and sorting assistants              | 2 1/2 months        |
| 2.  | Induction courses for LSG Grade officials                                   | 2 Weeks             |
| 3.  | Institutional training for Inspector, of Post Offices/ Railway Mail Service | 2 Weeks             |
| 4.  | Institutional training for officers of Group 'B' / Postmasters Group 'B'    | 6 Weeks/<br>4 Weeks |
| 5.  | Induction course for UDC(SBCO)                                              | 4 Weeks             |
| 6.  | Training for foreign trainees (at Saharanpur and Mysore only)               | 4-6 Weeks           |
| 7.  | Training for Instructors for the local training classes                     | 3 Weeks             |
| 8.  | Refresher courses for Inspectors of Post offices/Railway Mail Service       | 2 Weeks             |
| 9.  | Refresher courses for LSG Supervisors                                       | 2 Weeks             |
| 10. | Refresher courses for Postal Asstts.                                        | 2 Weeks             |
| 11. | Refresher courses for Sorting Asstts                                        | 2 Weeks             |
| 12. | Refresher course for HSG-I & HSG-II Postmasters                             | 2 Weeks             |
| 13. | Special Savings Bank Training for Supervisors                               | 2 Weeks             |
| 14. | Special Savings Bank Training for Postal Asstts.                            | 2 Weeks,            |

The cadres of Postal Superintendents Service Group 'B' and Postmasters Service Group B have been merged into one cadre of postal Superintendents Group 'B'. As suggested earlier, their induction and inservice training should be taken away from the Postal Training Centres and concentrated in the Postal Staff College.

**Postal Assistants/Sorting Assistants**

Merger of Postal Assistants and Sorting Assistants and Inspectors and Assistant Supdts. of POs and RMs, in due course, is on the cards and introduction of new technologies in postal operations are also being thought of. Existing training schedules of PTC's should be reviewed to provide for the new developments well in advance.

The period of induction training of Postal Assistants and Sorting Assistants for 2 1/2 months at the Centre is inadequate. They are supposed to undergo one month's practical training which they are not able to do because there is always shortage of staff and there are no proper arrangements for their on-the-job training in the post offices. There are three categories of persons who have to undergo this training, viz, (1) direct recruits; (2) departmentally promoted officials; and (3) those recruited on compassionate grounds. All these three are made to run through the same mill. It is felt that they require different approaches under which separate training capsules should be prepared. Another difficulty



experienced is with regard to language. For example, the training centre at Dharbanga caters to the North-Eastern States and the trainees from that area have difficulty in comprehending Hindi. The training is also mostly rule-oriented with very little input in the area of behavioural sciences, oral and written communication, general awareness, geography, etc. The period of training for PAS and SAS should be augmented and the scope of contents should be enlarged to cover the areas mentioned above and also areas like drafting, correspondence, use of simple machines used in the post offices, basic knowledge about postal accounts, PLI, Conduct rules and Army Postal services. The period of training at the Centre may be increased from 2 1/2 months to 3 months. Instructor: Trainee ratio should be improved so that there is effective interaction between the instructor and trainees and skills for the job are satisfactorily learnt. For practical training, the trainees should be posted to designated post offices with specific guidelines for on-the-job training, where the head of the office has himself received training in imparting practical training and understands the importance of on-the-job training, deploys the trainee correctly, rotates them periodically, gives them fresh guidance for development of skills learnt at the Centre and keeps them generally enthused. The examination should be at the end of practical training and not before. The papers will be set and evaluated by the PTC but the examination will be conducted by the Controlling Office, LSG Officials. The period of training for the LSG officials is also inadequate. It should be increased to three weeks. The officials in that grade belong to the line of front line supervisors and are deployed as Supervisors in various branches in the Post Offices of Head of Post Offices. Their functions are supervisory-cum-operative. Their activities involve a large element of inter-personal relationship not only with the colleagues, but also with members of public. Training should, therefore, be geared towards development of inter personal and supervisory skills. In the matter of departmental rules and procedures also they are supposed to guide the other postal staff working under them and the departmental input of training also needs to be strengthened. Their training should cover subjects like basic principles of management, public relations, communication and complaint handling, layout planning, decision-making and a little more thorough grounding in rules.

The induction training for LSG officials should be compulsory before posting to that grade. Arrangements therefore, should be made that when officials have put in about 14-15 years of service and before they are due for promotion to the LSG, they are given this training.

### **Inspectors**

The training period for the training of Inspectors is also inadequate. It should be increased to three weeks. The contents of the programme should also be strengthened by including subjects like basic principles of Management, Communication, Decision-making, Delegation, Public Relations, and Report Writing and Law.

### Refresher Courses

An omnibus refresher course is now being conducted for Postal Assistants. A similar course is conducted for the Sorting Assistants. The existing format needs to be changed keeping in view the following situations.

- (1) An official due for refresher course after completion of 5-7 years of service may continue to man an operative positions.
- (2) He may be posted to the divisional office or record office in the case of a Sorting Assistant or as Head of a single handed or double handed post office.
- (3) He may be moved to a post carrying a higher financial and accounting responsibility in Treasury Branch or the Administration or Accounts Branch of the Head post office etc;
- (4) The merger of PA's/SA's is on the cards and every assistant will have to be familiar with working of what are now separate postal and RMS wings.

In order to enable the Postal/Sorting Assistants to perform efficiently their functions in changed situations, the contents of the refresher training programmes should be suitably reviewed and revised and should also emphasis on subjects like Report Writing, Motivation, Communications, Environment in the office and so on.

In the refresher course for Inspectors, more attention needs to be paid to subjects like investigation techniques, human relations, disciplinary proceedings, work analysis and marketing and knowledge of machines used in the post offices.

### Uncovered Categories

There are a number of categories of postal employees who are not covered by any institutional training at present. They are extra-departmental branch Postmasters and sub-Post Masters Group 'D' employees, Postmen and Mail Guards, Mail Oversees, divisional office staff, accounts staff in head office and staff of postal store depots and central stamp depots

### PRI's

Some programmes have been conducted for Public Relations Inspectors but the number covered is small and the programmes are also not being conducted regularly. Since Public Relations Inspectors perform a very important function, training programmes for them in the Postal Training Centres should become a regular feature and all the officials who are to be posted as public Relations Inspectors should be given one week induction training before posting.

### **EDBPM's/SPM's/EDDA's**

There are some problems in getting extra departmental branch postmasters and sub-postmasters to the training Centres for a training programme, on working days. Although training for them at some single place, preferably a nearby head post office for 4 days before their posting would be ideal. If that is not possible, those already in position should undergo such training for four consecutive Sundays and they should be paid TA/DA for participating in the training programmes. The training should be of a workshop pattern and should concentrate on the following areas.

1. Branch Office Rules
2. E.D.A Conduct Rules
3. Public Relations
4. Savings Bank Work.

Training should be imparted by an Inspector trained for the purpose at the PTC. The PTC should also prepare distance learning modules for such EDBPM's/EDSPMs who just cannot leave the station, even on sundays like shopkeepers, for example.

EDDA's should also be given two day's training locally in matters relating to delivery, attitude towards public, information about the Department and its services and so on. PTC's should prepare a suitable training module and Sub- Divisional Inspectors should deliver the training module.

### **Postmen & Mail Oversees**

Postmen should be subjected to one week's institutional training at the Postal Training Centre and the emphasis should be on attitude moulding and public relations. The scheme under which some postmen were trained in the field though trainers trained for the purpose at the Postal Training Centres has not been very satisfactory. Mail Overseers who have to supervise mail lines and the work of branch offices should also be trained at the Postal Training Centres for one week with emphasis on supervisory skills, Public Relations and Inquiry and Investigation

### **Divisional Office Staff**

A one-week training programme for staff posted to the divisional office and also other administrative office like the office of the Regional Director and Office of the Postmaster General at the Postal Training Centre should be useful. In such a programme, trainee can share their experience and learn from each other and get some training in noting and drafting O&M procedures, record management, modern work methods and time management and understanding of problems of subordinate field units. PTC's should also have distance learning modules for this category of employees to cover cases where official cannot be deputed to the PTC.

### **Account Staff of Head Post Offices/Record Offices**

Accounts branches of Head Post Offices/Record offices perform very important functions and officials posted there need to be oriented towards the type of work they are to perform and also upto date knowledge in the area of accounts, leave rules, pension rules and other establishment matter. A suitably designed one week programme for this category of employees should be useful. The PTC's should also have distance learning modules for such of the officials of those categories who cannot be deputed to the PTC for some reasons.

### **Staff of Postal Store Depots and Stamp Depots**

The staff posted in Postal & Store Depots and Central Stamp Depots are drawn from the Divisions and there is a big change in their duties. Training to the staff detailed to these units in matters like inventory control, forecasting, requirements indenting; local printing and local purchases, storage transport, tenders and contracts, O&M, maintenance of registers etc. would be useful. A suitable training programme for two-weeks for those to be posted to Postal Stores Depots and one week for those posted to the Central Store Depots should be designed by the Postal Training Centres.

### **General Issues Relating to Training**

1. The second informal working group on training in the Department of Posts had recommended that there should be an overall training plan for the Department. It should also contain policy guidelines regarding criteria for nomination of officers for different training programmes. The Postal Services Directorate should develop such a plan for the officers of the cadres controlled by it, the Heads of Postal Circles should have similar plans for the cadres controlled by them and Divisional Superintendents should have similar plans for the staff controlled by them. For this purpose, each Circle Office should have a training officer and each Division should have a training inspector. The plan should take into account the training needs of staff and it should be a perspective plan.
2. There should always be training before induction of an employee in a post of higher responsibility.
3. Since it is not possible to send every employee to a training Institution, keeping in view the financial burden involved, the Postal Training Centres should develop distance learning capsules and self-learning packages including audio-cassette for employees where such capsules and packages would be useful. The Postal Training Centre, Mysore has prepared a detailed paper on this and the Department should work on this basis. The Postal Training Centre Mysore has circulated that at present the percentage of staff exposed to any training is 1:18 a year and if institutional training is supplemented by distance learning and programme learning and some more on-the-job training, the ratio can be brought to 1:4. This

recommendation calls for serious consideration by the Department. The distance learning capsules and package programme should be available in local languages for the staff at the Assistants level and below to overcome the problem of absorption of instructions in English or Hindi, particularly, by the employees who are promoted from the lower ranks.

4. Some more attention needs to be paid to proper selection and development of training faculty in the training institutions. The educational qualification, attitude, interest in training and willingness and capacity to learn and inspire and guide should be kept in view at the time of making a selection. The faculty should be composed of officials from different lines like inspectorial line, accounts line, general line, Postal and Railway Mail Service lines and so on, so that all aspects of postal work are covered. Opportunity should be provided to the faculty members to attend seminars, workshops, training programmes outside and generally broaden their academic interest, in all areas like Sociology, Public Administration, Psychology. The period of retention of faculty in the training institution should be 5-6 years. The faculty chosen should be carefully trained to use audio-visual training aids, training handouts, develop counselling skills, use mechanical and electronic aids and so on. The Department has plans for mechanisation and automation and the faculty should be properly equipped to take on the task of training and re-training employees in the use of highspeed franking and register machines, computerised mechanical aids in mail handling etc.
5. A formal channel of interaction between the training institutions and the field formations/units should be established and the authorities controlling different cadres and training officers at different levels should develop linkages so that training consciousness is promoted within the organization at all levels, training needs are matched with training opportunities and nominations for training, and training is properly utilised in placement and career development. There is a need for continuing education. It is necessary that what is learnt at the training institution is reinforced and strengthened by learning on the job. The proposed formal channel is necessary for this purpose and for proper utilisation of training handouts, audio-cassettes and programme packages which should be circuited on need basis by the PTC's, and guidance by the heads of offices and training officers at different levels.
6. Provision also needs to be made for on-the-spot brief interventions in specific offices to solve specific performance/problems. The head of the office with the help of training officer in the Division can identify a problem which can be taken to the Postal Training Centre, which should study the problem and devise a suitable training programme to solve that problem. Such problems can be in the area of operations, inter-personal relationship, staff relations, office layout, work flow and

so on. Such interventions are expected to provide a salutary alternative to rule based bureaucratic responses to problems and generate a healthy climate in the organization. The Postal Training Centre faculty will also learn by interaction with the field units and bring back field experience cases for class room instruction. Such intervention will also pave a way for participative style of management.

7. This is a general perception that the training imparted at the postal training institutions now is more concerned with work methods and rules and regulations than instilling in the trainees an awareness of public interest to be served by the post office and generating in them enthusiasm for the work as contribution to society. Because of this situation there is also lack of self-esteem among the employees. There is, therefore, need for redesigning training of managerial and supervisory cadres in such a way that they are able to encourage participation in decision-making, inspire confidence and trust among the subordinate staff so that they can develop self-esteem and live upto the trust and confidence reposed in them. Similarly, the training of operative staff should have an element or attitudinal moulding programmes. The redesigned programmes should also have some inputs of problem-solving, work-redesign and participative functioning, improving written and oral skills and taking service as a matter of pride and satisfaction by making them perceive the importance of their role.
8. Like continuing education of the employees there should be a continuing evaluation and monitoring of the training effort and its impact on the employees and on the quality of service. There should also be an annual conference on training which should discuss and formulate proposals regarding (a) perspective training plan for the Department; (b) course contents and training techniques for various courses; (c) research studies in different aspects of postal operations; and (d) action on suggestions for improving the system.

#### **Placement/Transfer Policies**

The Department of Posts has been operating two very good transfer policies i.e. tenure transfer policy and the policy of rotational transfers. But it cannot be said that its general policy of placement has been that good. None of these is however, linked to any human resource development plans of the Department or career development plans of individual employees. It has also not been always possible to enforce tenure transfers strictly due to various reasons. Sometimes there is financial stringency and consequent a ban on all transfers as a measure of economy and sometimes political and other pressures are brought to bear to stall implementation of the policy. In the case of rotational transfers, heads of post offices experience, other types of difficulties. They find the promoted officials not competent to man certain positions and usually they have to work under conditions of shortages of staff. There has been a growing tendency on the part of young direct recruits to the Indian Postal Service to get the very first posting to their home State. Several officials



also tend to avoid transfers from certain stations by adopting measures like seeking bureaucratic or political pressures or deputation out of the Department. Some officers go to Army Postal Service and stay there for years. The result is that they do not develop any sense of belonging to the Department and professionalism and indepth grassroot experience of postal operations and their problems. In order to develop the offices properly and give them varied exposure, it is desirable that direct recruits should be first posted away from their home states, preferably and systems of organization and working. A posting in a RMS Division as first posting gives the experience of man management and mail management. This can be followed by posting to a postal division when the officer gains experience of management of counter services, delivery services and development of postal services. Now that some posts of Postmasters/Deputy Presidency Postmasters in Group A are available, they should also be posted to such posts to gain experience of the complex functioning of large post offices and understand problems of man management and postal operations in such offices. After this the officer can go to Army Postal Service for a tenure of 2-3 years or be posted in the office of Postmaster General in a functional area according to his or her aptitude, interest and suitability. If the Circles in each of these assignments are deferent, the officer gains valuable varied experience and on promotion to the junior administrative grade, he will be expected to make useful contributions to the service. A system of tenure transfers is a very healthy system. Different types of assignments and changes at suitable intervals contribute to the growth and development of the officers, avoid development of any vested interests and chances of getting stale and rusted. Similarly, the rotational transfers of the inspectorial and supervisory and operative staff to different branches give them varied experience and help in their growth and development. The promoted officers have a problem in moving to a different station at posting to a charge way from their previous place of work is desirable for not only their growth and development but also for developing in them a certain distance from the environment in which they have worked in a subordinate capacity.

It has been observed that there is a general mismatch between training and placement. People trained in particular disciplines are not posted to the jobs where such training would be useful. The officers trained in personnel management or training techniques are not posted to personnel or training jobs. Similarly, some clerks and supervisor, given savings bank training are not posted in savings bank branches. If training and placements are parts of a proper personnel policy of the Department, such situations should not arise.

Although sometimes circulars are issued to ascertain choices of stations from individuals who are due for transfers in the existing system, there is a feeling among the staff that they do not always get posting of their choice. There is also a feeling that there is unnecessary hush about posting and transfers and the employees are not always taken into confidence and their problems and requests are not always taken into consideration. A greater openness in the operation or placement and transfer policies of the Department

should result in better satisfaction to the staff. Tenure transfers, rotational transfer, placement and training courses should all form part of career development plans for the employees within the broad personnel policy framework of the Department. A suitable structural reorganization at different levels i.e. the Directorate, the Circles the Regional Directorates and Divisional Offices and large operative offices by designating officers to be responsible for the implementation of personnel policies and career development plans is necessary.

### **Human Resource Development and Personnel Policies**

As suggested above placement/transfer and training should form part of career development plans of individuals employees within the framework of personnel plans of the Department. The Department must have a personnel policy with formal defined objectives. Problems arise when there is no policy and when there are no defined objectives. If the objective is to generate a certain number of jobs, emphasis will be different. If the objective is to provide maximum job satisfaction to the employees and good working conditions, the emphasis will be different. The personnel policy of a PTT organization in Europe has the following objectives:

1. Promoting maximum possibilities for personal development;
2. Providing job in harmony with the employees character and capacities;
3. Providing for sufficient delegation or responsibility and independence;
4. Involving the staff in decision-making;
5. Stimulating communication within the organization; and
6. Promoting social security and job security.

Another organization provides for flexibility in personnel administration, doing away with promotion pyramids and hierarchy and staff classifications which lead to rigid and restricted outlook, mobility, both lateral and vertical and functional versatility and so on within the personnel policy framework and objectives of proper personnel policy to be drawn up. The Department should give some attention to the following areas:

1. Organize well-staffed personnel units in the offices of cadre controlling authorities i.e. the Postal Services Directorate for Group A and Group B officers, Circle offices for supervisory cadres, and divisional offices for the cadres of assistants, postmen and others personnel manning these units should be exposed to training in personnel management and manpower planning and career planning. These units should work out appropriate career patterns and training and placement of employees in a manner best suited to utilisation of their individual skills and potentialities for meeting the needs of the Department. These units should do detailed exercises in manpower planning i.e. estimating, and analysing staff requirements in the light of needs and anticipated development. They should also carry out studies to determine what posts require what type of specialization and abilities and skills, draw up inventories of existing resources and carer development plans for training



and retraining individuals with potential and required aptitudes.

2. Provide for comprehensive and periodical cadre reviews of all categories of employees in the total plan with holistic total approach., Cadre reviews have so far been carried out in respect of the Indian Postal Group A, but no systematic cadres reviews have been carried out for all categories of employees keeping in view their inter-relationships. As the figures of employees of different categories will show, There is one supervisory official for about 28 operative staff and the ratio between managerial staff and the operative staff is still more unsatisfactory. With the help of cadre reviews it should be possible to create more positions of postal managers, supervisors and inspectors, making for an all round staff satisfaction. The position today is that the inspectorial cadres are dissatisfied and frustrated with their promotional prospects severely curtailed. The managerial cadre carry very heavy loads. The supervisors have lost all initiative and have no incentive because of the policy of the first time-bound promotion. All categories of staff should get their first promotion in around 16 years of service and second promotion after about 28 years of service but this should not be automatic as insisted upon by the unions. Such promotions should about as a result of periodical cadre reviews. The cadre reviews should take into account the advance projections of requirement of personnel or all levels in order to plan recruitment on scientific basis, review cadre structure of all services to improve where necessary the promotion prospects of various services and for rationalization and for improving efficiency and effectiveness. Automatic time-bound promotion has no rational basis. Promotion should be linked to cadre management by creation of posts, upgradation of posts etc, to correct any imbalances and provide for desired promotions
3. Build up specialisations, so that there is greater professionalism. Areas of specialization can be planning and statistic; personnel administration, training, business management (to deal with increasing emphasis of business aspect of the organization) marketing and agency functions, mail operations including transportation systems, counter operation international mail, mechanisation/automation, materials management.
4. Improve working environment. In order to counter monotony in highly repetitive jobs at the cutting edge level, exercises in job enrichment and work design should be developed, A concerted drive should be organized to improve working environment in operative offices. This will require attention to postal building and provision of basic amenities, in offices where they do not exist The existing feudal values and bureaucratic culture and non- participation of staff in decision-making, breed frustration and dissatisfaction and attitudes of sycophancy and apathy. To counter this, efforts should be made to provide opportunities to the operative staff to get involved with supervisors and managers and participate in decision-making

to achieve results. There should be more and more mutual informal interaction among employees of different levels.

5. A strong point with the organization is the general sense of belonging and family feeling among the employees which is showing signs of gradual erosion. The Department should strengthen this feeling by highlighting individual contributions and merit and performance in the house magazine Dak Patrika which should have more frequent issues. The Department should also think of designing a reward system linked to higher performance. Above normal performance should be suitably remunerated. Opportunities to pick up higher qualifications should be provided. Besides individual monetary incentive, group incentives for voluntary extra output should also be provided.
6. Revamp the ACR System which forms the pivot of a personnel system, in the light of clearly defined objectives of the Department's personnel policies and the role of ACR's in that policy. Is the ACR system to be used only for promotion and as an instrument of control and authority as at present, or should it be used as a tool for optimization of the organisation and its employees, or as an aid to personnel planning, placement and training and career development plans or as an instrument of efficiency audit and deficiency correction? Visible parameters of an ACR system or appraisal system i.e, forms, relevant instructions, the appraisers and the appraisees are only a small part of the system. More important are the invisible parameters i.e. cultural factors, ethical considerations, dichotomy between what one says and what one does, gaps in perception, anxiety on both sides, personality clash etc,

The Department of Posts today is using six different ACR forms for different categories of employees, i.e. Members of the Postal Services Board and Deputy Directors Generals, Senior, Administrative Grade Officers, other Group A Officers, Group B Officers, employees of supervisory cadres and operative staff, The forms for the operative staff and supervisory staff appear to be the old App 9 and App 11 forms. Other forms appear to have been recently revised and made rather cumbersome. It appears that in its quest for comprehensiveness, the Department has made them too elaborate, resulting in overlapping and repetitiveness and also certain blurring of clarity. It is not understood as to why one form or all the managerial cadres cannot do, when a single form for so many types of operatives of both postal and Telecommunication Departments is serving its purpose all right. All categories of gazetted officers perform managerial functions at different levels, why can't one form do for them? The reports are confidential; a reportee does not know what the reporting and reviewing officers have written about him. It can be a wishy washy report without being specifically adverse, even though a reportee may have had a chance to say something in terms of his own achievements in Part-II. The approach to ACR writing is judgmental instead of developmental. Items relating to attributes allow great scope for

subjectivity. The design of the forms smacks of class consciousness, with more attention to Group A than to the other categories of employees and with no provision for assessment of their potential and training needs.

Action in the following directions is suggested:-

- (a) The word 'Confidential' should be banished as it militates against mutual trust and confidence. The nomenclature should be changed from 'Annual Confidential Reports' to 'Annual performance Appraisal Reports'.
  - (b) Attitude in report writing should change from judgmental to developmental.
  - (c) Forms should be revised and simplified to provide for equality in assessment of all categories of employees.
  - (d) The system should be made more open, to build up a culture of openness, frankness and friendliness. The report forms should have only items on which both the appraiser and the appraisee can discuss freely, like performance targets. Efforts may also be made to show as much of the report to the appraisee as possible.
  - (e) The emphasis should shift, to make the appraisal report as an instrument of career development of individuals and building up of specialists and professionals, as a help to the individual employees to see their strengths and weaknesses, their achievements and failures and their contribution to the service.
  - (f) Appraisal report writing should be a continuous exercise throughout the year instead of being an annual ritual. The Department may think of restoring the system of Memos of services to be maintained for all employees in which instances of good work and badwork and indifferent work should be recorded as and when they occur in addition to instances of oral counselling and advice and which should form the basis of the annual report.
  - (g) Writing of appraisal reports is a complex and onerous task and it seems that a large number of reports are casually and carelessly written. They are usually vague and cryptic and the reporting officers not only tend to be subjective but also differ, widely in their standards of assessment, particularly on items which are unquantifiable, like personality attitudes. All the reporting officers should be passed through a training workshop in annual appraisal report writing.
7. Do something to change the perception of the top management as thrown up by the consumer survey, which is seen to be the main cause of the maladies at different levels of management. This is an area where the patent has to heal himself. He can take the help of experts to interact with, who can show the mirror and enable the patent to see himself, identify problems and find solutions. But there has to be willingness to introspect and change. If the top managers do not have self-esteem and sense of pride in the service, clarity about objectives and tasks and motivation and enthusiasm for their achievement, cohesiveness and team-spirit and willingness to subordinate their personal prejudices and predilections to the superordinate goals of the Department which should be efficiency in service and welfare of all the employees, it is difficult to change the environment.

## CHAPTER - 5

## MANAGEMENT RELATIONS AND PRODUCTIVITY

## A. MANAGEMENT RELATIONS

Management relations are important for bringing about harmonious technological advancement. This harmony entails cooperation between employer and employee based on reciprocity and responsibility which results in more productivity and efficiency. These relations are of vital significance in case of service organization because same have a direct bearing on the quality of services rendered to the community at large.

The extent of good staff relations depends up on the extent of redressal of staff grievances by the management. Normally, the grievances forces an employee to join union/association to bring pressure on the management for acceding to their demands. On the otherhand, cordial staff relations are indicator of mutual trust cooperation, accomodative and sympathetic attitude of the management towards its employee. It is not difficult to handle staff grievances provided honest and conentrated efforts are made. At times, it becomes difficult to solve a problem particularly when management sits over it and allows it to go out of hand due to delay in taking decision and its implementation. Timely decisions and implementation of genuine demands bring confidence among the employee and help reach better understanding between management and the staff otherwise it brings friction, strains, suspicion between the two parties which tells upon the work output.

The staff relations in the Department of Posts as developed over a period of time have affected the staff relations. In this respect we have to look into the historical perspective of the Trade Union Movement in the Department of Posts and Telegraph.

During 1968-1986 new federations i.e. FNPO and BPEF were created. However, the federation were not very active.

The staff relations became strained because the interests of the employee were effected by imposing ban on recruitment in 1984<sup>1</sup>. The Department issued private licences for postal work; stamp vending; and closing and reducing the number of staff and post offices. The union demanded for improving the conditions of EDAs, the bonus for employee, abolition of posts, absorbtion of casual labour in the light of Supreme Court Judgement, the second promotion and issue of split duty etc.

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1. The problem was discussed in Rajya Sabha on 16.5.85, 1.8.85 and 22.8.85 including filling vacancies through promotion of senior officers, regularization of casual labour and temporary employees.

The discontent of employee increased and Union planned for direct action in 1987. In the meantime, the negotiations were carried on between the union leaders and the Department but they failed. The NFPE, after its Calcutta meeting initiated a move to form a confederation. A Joint Council of Action was formed and notice was served to the Department of Posts to go on strike from July 14-20, 1987. The Labour Commissioner tried for conciliation but the Union representatives declined to attend the proceedings. The representative wanted a bilateral settlement with the Postal Board.

The confederation made hectic effort for success of the strike. The Minister discussed the issues with the representatives of the Confederation on 2-10 July, 1987 and on his intervention, an accord was signed between the representatives of the four federations i.e. NFPT, FNPO, BPEF, AIPEA and the DG (P) on July 11, 1987. (Annexure XVI). The strike was called off.

The Union representative waited for sometime for the implementation of the accord. They met twice the Secretary (P) on 19.4.1988 and 22.4.1988, to know the progress of implementation of the items of the accord which the official side agreed to inform them. Neither the fixed date has been mentioned nor the period within which the accord will be implemented. Union needed a categorical reply with specific period for implementation of accord from the official side. On 10.7.1987, the Minister of communication agreed to appoint a Parliament Sub-Committee to re-examine the scheme of recognition of RMS and make recommendations. The Unionisation in the Department has a number of features, some of which are being mentioned in the following paras.

### **Multiplicity of Union**

There are three federations in the Department of Posts at present viz (National Federation of Postal Employee(NFPE), Federation of National Postal Organization (FNPO), and Postal Employee Federation(BPEF) recognized by the Department of Posts, NFPE has five unions, FNPO has six and BPEF has seven unions federated to it. (Annexure-XVII) Apart for this, there are a number of non-federated unions, such as All India Association of Postmaster, (Gazetted & HSG) All India Postal Accounts Employees Associations, Postal Officers Association (India) and Indian Postal Service Association and so on.

The multiplicity and the Unions have encouraged politics among themselves and different political linkages. This has affected the sectional interest and inter and intra factional politics. The unions have overlapping jurisdictions. This multiplicity is the result of the defective Trade Union Act, which empowers 'any seven persons' to form a union.<sup>2</sup>

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2. The Trade Union Act, 1926, Chapter II, p.318.

The amendment of the Act and restriction of membership can only curb the multiplicity of unions in the Department. The criteria should be 35 to 45 per cent membership for recognition of union. The Department of personnel, Government of India, is also working on the rules of recognition. This is a quite sensitive issue. The Department may discuss the issue with the union leaders in an open session.

### **Constitution**

By and large, all the federated unions have their constitution. One of the objectives contained in their constitution is 'extension of their cooperation in smooth running of the postal service'. The Department of Posts should utilize this clause and identify areas where the postal service can be improved with the help of unions. The future role could be chalked out after mutual discussion with union.

### **Membership**

An attempt was made to ascertain, the membership of federations and non-federated unions. Some unions gave vague replies, some gave number, some gave annual subscription amount and others did not reply. (Annexure-XXVIII) The total membership as given by the Unions exceeded the total staff strength of Department of Posts. Multi-membership is one of the major problems. Although, the Ministry of labour since 1978 is seized of the problem, but it has not succeeded so far.

### **Communication**

Most of the Union have their own media for dissemination of information to its members through their journal which carries information about correspondence with the Department, major decisions of Department of Posts and Government of India and Judicial decisions as well as information and the union decisions are giving in such communications. The Journal could carry column in which development programmes with an appeal to the workers to improve postal service could be published. This will have a wider effect on the employees of the Department. The journal could be translated into regional languages which will have greater effect.

### **Facilities**

Looking at the union facilities, circulars of the Department, revealed that the Department accorded facilities to the unions between 1950-1978 (Annexure-XIX) including the directives to regulate the union meetings. The Department should assign some developmental role to unions along with the facilities so that there is some sort of binding on them. Only providing facilities and not expecting anything from the union will not bear any result. The union will always have upper hand in securing facilities. It will be only spoon feeding on the part of the Department.

### Leadership

The central leadership in most of the Unions comprized of retired employees of the Department. Since, the lower level leadership of the unions at circle, and levels mostly comes from within the service, there is duality of responsibility i.e. with the Department and with the union. Due to inadequate knowledge and foresightedness of the local leaders, the demands are not well articulated at the circle and divisional levels. The federations can do a lot in educating their members while putting matter before the Department.

### Finances

As regard the financial position, the union mostly depend upon the membership subscription which varies between Rs.3 and 5 per month, donations and special collection. Their is a quota system for branch, circle and central levels in the constitution of Unions and also about collection and its remittance. This aspect require regulation by the federation themselves. The unions have admitted in their reports about poor collection and remittance of subscription. The malpractices in collection process cannot be reduced without the alertness of union members. The federation could enlighten the members regarding their role and responsibility towards union as well as towards the Department. The Unions can be a powerful instrument if they are handled properly and exploited for the best interest of employees, and postal services.

Most of the federated union have their branches at all the Circles and divisional levels which varied between 200 and 600. The non-federated unions have their branches at Central and circle levels.

### Bargaining power

Looking at the Trade Union Movement, it was observed that during the British Period, the P & T union had more bargaining power due to its unity, support from the political circles to fight with the alien rulers. It is evident from the strike organized in 1946 which was most successful. After independence, although the P&T Unions came at one platform in 1954, the failure was more observed in 1960 general strike of Government employees where the P&T had to almost surrender. The union did not organize strikes which were of significant nature, except token strikes, demonstrations at the central, circle and division levels (Annexure-XX).

During 1986-87, the formation of FNPO and BPEF was a glaring example for doubting the loyalty of workers. It could be viewed that workers who got fed up with the action of NFPE and joind FNPO and BPEF, the new federations and union affiliated to it with the hope to get their demands fulfilled.



The only achievement, apart from strikes and demonstrations of small nature, was when the Joint Action Council which was formed for strike in 1987 got an agreement successfully signed with DG' (P) and assurances in Parliament. The federations only sent reminders for the implementation of the agreement. They still lacked foresightedness and vigour to get the time bound implementation of the agreement by the management to fulfil the aspiration of their members. In order to press for their demand, the NFPE organized one day token strike on 25.6.87 which the other two federations did not join due to ideological differences.

### Strength of Union

1. Administrative lapses, rules and procedures, weak grievance redressal machinery.
2. Monthly collection of subscription showing loyalty.
3. Existence of loyal workers and willingness of employees to get their demands fulfilled through unions.
4. Conflicting decisions of the administration, and weak implementation process.
5. Lack of official organizational goal clarity.
6. Political patronage.
7. Favourable legal position; Trade Union Act, CAT, Industrial Dispute Act 1947, JCM, and legal sanctions.
8. Strong central organization, constitution and channel of communication.

### Weaknesses

1. Lack of dynamic leadership.
2. Weak organizational structure and control.
3. Multi membership and lack of unity.
4. Non articulation of demands, clarity of perspective, and lack of vision and foresightedness.
5. Self interest, old and tired leadership with strong likes and dislikes.
6. Docile actions to fulfil demands.
7. Weak financial position.
8. Lack of longterm goal and programmes.

The weak grievance redressal machinery and ineffective J.C.M. has led the employees to knock the doors of legal Court under the Industrial Dispute Act, 1947. (Annexure-XXI)

The Department can have counter action provided it improves its implementation process to achieve zero strike situation in the Department. Strikes are burden on services and Government exchequer. Department also becomes handicapped many a times because many issues in management union relations relate to central leadership.



However, unpalatable it may strike, it must be conceded that the Trade Union Movement in Department of Posts has not come of age. Apart, from raising their banners for higher wages and better service conditions, the Trade Unions have not made any significant contribution towards bettering the services to the Customers who foot their bills for increased wages. It has not accorded positive and healthy suggestions for the improvement of the service to the people. Workers' participation in management is a concept, which has to wait for better days in the future when the unions would be made to realise their obligations to the society at large. Ushering in a realistic National Wage Policy and stipulating the grounds of accountability of the public service to the customers are pre-conditions for cordial relations between the employee-employer and also between the organisation and customer. This process can only evolve itself through the coming years and it may not be possible to accelerate it by statutory regulations and mere wishful thinking.

### **Perception of Union**

While discussing with the Union's role in the Department of Post, efforts were made to know there perception. The official viewed the union as trouble maker and do not allow them to work smoothly. They interfere in the day-to-day administration. the Union leaders come to them for petty things and wants them to do individual favours like posting, transfers, press for promotion and individual facilities.

It was stated that the union had no time to spend on the Workers Participation in Management Scheme launched by the Department. They always took one plea or the other to avoid attending meetings. As such, the scheme could not see the light of the day. The same thing was said by officials for the W.I.T. (Work Improvement Team) Scheme which came into being in 1987 and implemented in 1988. The official had to persuade workers to select group leader and meetings.

On the other hand, the unions leaders were of the view that the official concealed many things to make it known to union. They were of the view that the scheme of Worker's Participation in Management could not be implemented in the right spirit. The scheme could have been explained in proper perspective and identify areas for participation. The official always take decision and do not appreciate if any body intervenes. They take it as if their own personal prestige is involved. The direct recruits within a short posting in Division as probationars get less opportunity to feel about the people and their problems. They lack practical knowledge about the operational problems faced by the workers.

The union officials were of the opinion that they want to improve working of the Department and its image provided they are consulted at appropriate places. They should be informed about the improvement schemes, its pros and coins. The consultation at the

Directorate level may be alright to some extent but at the Circle and Divisional levels, it requires enormous change in out-look of those in authority.

Regarding unions, the employees were mostly of the opinion that although they give subscription but they do not participate in the meetings because there is lot of internal politics in the unions. The leader want to retain their leadership as such indulge in group politics. Everybody wants to have his own empire. There are however some enlightened and matured leaders who think before taking up an issue for action.

It was revealed that the central level unions confine to their demands mostly around the personnel policy, placement, creation of posts, bonus and working conditions. On the other hand, the circle/regional level unions mostly touched upon the problems in operative units of the postal services, behaviour pattern of senior officials, non-implementation of directives received from the higher levels.

At times, the lower level unions confine to matters like transfer, posting, and matters petty in nature. The lower level union leadership have not been able to articulate their demands and put them in the right perspective. The reason could be there is also lack of professionalism among the union leaders at the lower level. To train the union official, federations have organized a few seminars and training programmes more such ventures are needed. It is suggested that the lower level leadership needs change attitude in order to rise above the personal interest and think of the postal community to which they represent.

The other aspect is that union members think that if a leader mixes with the administrative side too much, they are influenced by the bureaucracy. The union member think that the leadership has forgotten the welfare of members. This has also adverse effect on election of leader. This factor compels union leadership not to mix with the bureaucracy. Workers feel that their problems at times get lost in the crowd. Although, there are shortcomings in the union but it is performing its democratic role to keep the balance between the worker and management, they felt.

The Department on its part should consider unions as part of the Department. Union will exist as long as the Department exists. The Department should give them status and make them equal partner in the departmental affairs. The leadership of union generally keeps the issue burning in order to safeguard their position. This aspect needs a change and the Department has to play a positive role in improving the implementation process of workers demand. The leadership of union has always a firm footing on the defects or shortcomings of the Department. The conflict can be avoided if there are avenues for discussion with the union representatives, a series of meetings and things can be solved in cordial atmosphere.

More participation and cooperation of the unions in the management is essential. There should be proper flow of information to the unions and vice-versa, periodical meetings and prompt implementation of the decision, will bring faith among workers and respect for the Department. The unions should essentially be consulted at all levels, i.e. Directorate, Circle, Region and Division and lower level in the decision-making processes.

### **Joint Consultative Machinery**

In the Department of Posts, prior to 1966, there was hardly any machinery to discuss and solve employee's problem except departmental grievance committee. In 1966, the Government of India floated a scheme called Joint Consultative Machinery and Compulsory Arbitration Scheme. This scheme has three tiers i.e., National, Department and Regional levels. This scheme was formulated on the lines of J.H. Whitely Committee of United Kingdom for permanent improvement in the relation between employees and the workmen. (Annexure-XXII).

This schemes as being operated in the Department has representation from the staff as well as official side at the Department and circle levels. Apart from this, there is arrangement to meet with different federations and its affiliated unions every month for redressal of their grievances.

On giving through the minutes, it was revealed that the Departmental Committee is being utilized by the union to get their demands resolved. It seems that there is no proper involvement from union and official side to feel about each other. It is just a see-saw game where only questions are answered. It is therefore, needed that the Departmental, Circle/Regional Committee could be used for mutual discussion of the problems for their own benefit. The attitude should be sympathetic, sporting and in cordial atmosphere.

The two federation NFPPF and FNPO have been allotted seats the Departmental Committee in the ration of 5:2 and it is accepted for the time being. The Chairman is empowered to distribute membership. The third federation is still fighting for its berth in J.C.M. It is suggested that the Departmental Committee should have representation of the federation on the basis of membership distributed among the federation on mutually accepted formula. It may be considered that the non-federated unions of All India character with same membership criteria, should also be given berth in the J.C.M for redressal of their grievances. Efford should also be made to get representation of Extra Departmental Agents in J.C.M.

### Representation

The constitution of the Departmental Committee does not specify the number of retired persons to represent in the Department Committee. A sizeable number of retired persons represent the federation and union in the Departmental Committee. (Annexure-XXII) While taking with employees, it was opined that service officials can represent and participate better because they are part of the Department. It is therefore suggested that the strength of retired persons in the Departmental Committee should be gradually reduced to keep balance between the retired and service officials. The federations/union should be insisted to discuss the issue.

### Periodicity

The constitution of J.C.M. envisages that the meeting of the Departmental Committee and Regional Committees should take place quarterly with fifteen days notice for ordinary meeting to each member. The data collected shows that there are irregular meetings of the Departmental Committee. This is also true with Circle/Regional Committees. It was noticed that only Karnataka had four meetings of Regional Committee during 1980. (Table - 5, 5.1) Maharashtra could have only one meeting in 1987 after a gap of four years. It is therefore, suggested that the Departmental as well as Circle/Regional Committees should meet as per the constitutional requirement of the J.C.M., otherwise, the J.C.M. will lose its importance. One of the effective steps is that the date for next meeting should be fixed in the current meeting.

Table-5

Detail of the Meetings of Regional Committees during 1986-88

Circles	Meetings of Regional Council		
	1986	1987	1988
Karnataka	4	3	1
Maharashtra	-	1	1
West Bengal	-	1	1
Uttar Pradesh	3	1	3

Table 5.1

West Bengal Regional Committee Meeting (Four monthly)

Year	No.	No
1986	2	1
1987	2	3
1988	2	1

### Agenda

The items for agenda is suggested by staff side. Official side has to be intimated to the staff relation unit eight weeks in advance. Any item dropped which does not fall under the pervue of the council has to be intimated by the staff relation unit with the reasons therefor. The final acceptance or rejection of agenda rests with Director General (P) and PMG at the circle level.

It often happens that a large number of items are sent and it becomes difficult to dispose of these items in a single meeting and are thus kept pending for the next meeting. It was also noticed that some of the items for agenda were rejected because they fall outside pervue of the constitution. (Table - 5.2.,5.3.,5.4, 5.5).

Table 5.2

Items for Agenda  
West Bengal Circle

Year Rejected <sup>3</sup>	Received	Accepted	
1986	33	29	4
1987	44	41	3
1988	45	12	3
Total:	122	112	10

3. Items did not covered by the Rules of RCM. Some items were rejeced for having similar items in 4 monthly meeting.

Table - 5.3  
4 monthly meetings  
(West Bengal Circle)  
items for agenda

Year	Total No.	Approved
1986	48	48
1987	142	142
1988	48	48
Total	238	238

Table - 5.4  
Items for Agenda  
Maharashtra Circle

Year	Total No.	approved	Rejected
1966	-	-	-
1987	41	29	12
1988	67	45	12
Total	108	74	24

Table - 5.5  
Maharashtra Circle  
(Four Monthly Meeting)

Year	Items received	Approved
1986	77	77
1987	97	97
1988	76	76
Total	250	250

It was revealed while going through minutes of the meetings of Departmental Committee, that a number of items were, referred to Committee, to be discuss with Board Members, to be examined, to be looked into, proceeding for disagreement, differed for next meeting and closed. This was also found true in case of the Regional Committee. The minutes of the meeting also indicated action being taken, waiting for decision from Directorate, report asked for etc. This causes delay in matter. It is therefore, suggests that a committee with staff and officials should scrutinize the items before it is put to the Departmental and Regional Committee Meetings in order to effectively deal with the item.

In most of the cases, the JCM/RCM meetings discussed the personnel (Table - 5.6 5.7, 5.8, 5.9) followed by operative, working conditions and administrative matters.

Table 5.6

Nature of items discussed in the Departmental Committee  
JCM (27-28.7.88)

Items discussed Percentage	NO	
Personnel	33	37.93
Personnel (Finance)	26	29.88
Working Condition	2	2.29
Staff relations	4	4.50
Personnel Policy	1	1.14
Operative	7	8.04
Administrative	5	5.74
JCM	2	2.29
Welfare	6	6.89
Corruption	1	1.14
<b>Total</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>99.84</b>

Table - 5.7

Departmental Committee  
(JCM 27-28.1.88)

Nature of items. Percentage Discussed	No.	
Personnel policy	19	38.77
Personnel (Finance)	16	32.65
Staff relations	1	2.04
Administrative	3	6.12
Operative	3	6.12
Working condition(Welfare)	4	8.16
JCM	3	6.12
<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>99.98</b>

Table- 5.8

Regional Committee meeting (U.P.)  
(13.4.88)

<u>Items discussed</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Personnel	27	36.48
Operative	2	2.70
Work facilities	8	10.08
Medical/welfare facility	5	6.75
Welfare	3	4.05
Finance	6	8.10
Administration	10	13.51
SR	5	6.75
Discipline	1	1.35
Corruption	1	1.35
Working Conditions	3	4.05
Personnal Finance	3	4.05
<b>Total</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>99.22</b>



Table - 5.9

Nature of items discussed in RCM(U.P)  
(24.3.88)

Items discussed Percentage	NO	
Administrative	6	19.35
Financial	3	9.67
Staff relations	2	6.45
Personnal	12	38.70
Welfare	3	9.67
Operative	1	3.22
Administration process	1	3.22
Personnal(finance)	1	3.22
Work facilities	2	6.45
Total	31	99.95

Apart from quarterly meeting of JCM, there is also a provision for bi-monthly with individual federations/union. The duplication of items discussed in these meetings have been observed. Bi-monthly meetings lessons the importance of JCM. It is suggested that all the federation and non federated unions of all India character should meet once a month to monitor implementation to save time and energy. In fact, monthly meeting could be used for monitoring the progress of implementation.

Staff side often raises issues at the introduction stage at the start of the meeting. This takes away quite some time of the meeting. It is suggested that the staff side should intimate the official side about items to be taken in introductory stage to prepare in advance for a meaningful discussion and if possible these item should be taken as a part of agenda.

The constitution of the Departmental Committee also provides for items of agenda could be referred to special committees. These items require in-depth study. A time bound practice should be adopted for referring items to the committee, its report, followed by speedy implementation.

The J.C.M./RCM meetings have enormous usefulness provided they are carried out whole-heartedly and adhere the procedure laid down in the constitution.

## Arbitration

In the event of disagreement further action as envisaged in the JCM Scheme is to ask for arbitration. It is a long process in which that are number of procedural steps have to be taken in case of disagreement. The Minister of Communication takes decision in consultation with the Minister of Home Affairs and Labour. The staff side is also invited to present their case before them. At times, it gives impression that genuine demands are denied. It is therefore, suggested that due care should be taken to choose the issues for arbitration in consultation with the staff side. The staff side deliberately chooses, at times, an item for disagreement in order to get an award. In fact a committee consisting of staff and official could look into the issue for arbitration before it is finally put in the Departmental Committee.

It is found that a number of cases have been proposed for arbitration/disagreement and majority of them have been decided in favour of staff side. (Annexure-XXIV) The latest in this regard is demand of the postal staff on spilt duty which intended to reduce duty by one hour excluding the meal relief be given conveyance allowance to meet the additional expenditure for going home between the two in spells of duty. This demand was referred to arbitration in 1987 and decision went in favour of staff side. (Annexure-XXV)

The official side probably could not argue the case properly because of the lack of professionalism, as a result the case was lost. It is therefore, suggested that there should be a qualified legal advisor/consultant to represent the Department in case of arbitration. In fact, a legal cell could be created at all levels to meet legal requirements.

The official side prepares a proposal after an arbitration is lost (for rejection) of the award for Parliament. In majority of the cases, these proposals have also been rejected by the Parliament. This shows continued denial of just demand of the staff side by the Department and as a result there is enormous financial loss to the Department in the long run. This is a clear reflection on the decision making authority and its proper implementation at a proper time.

Annexure XXIV shows that a number of award have not been implemented properly. This is also true with recommendations of the Savor Committee (1984) which was set up to review the basis for remunerating the services of Extra Departmental Agents. The problem of EDAs was also discussed on floor of the Parliament. The Savor Committee gave 171 recommendations and most of the recommendations have been accepted and order were issued between 1987 and 1988. (Annexure-XXVI) It took four years to accept recommendations of the committee and to issue orders.

### **Administrative set up of Staff Relation Unit**

At present the Staff Relation Unit is headed by a Director who is directly responsible to the Chairman of the Departmental Committee. The Director has a small staff to assist him. The decisions of the Departmental Committee are communicated to the various units by the SR unit. It monitors the follow-up action. It is observed that there is delay in the process.

It is suggested after the SR unit has sent decisions of the Departmental Committee for implementation to the concerned unit, the DDG of unit should be made responsible for time-bound implementation of decisions of Department Committee. It should be followed up with "feed back" and accountability to avert dynamics involved in implementation process. The officials should not take it as a routine matter. Similarly, Director at Circle Regional, SSP at Divisional level should be made responsible for speedy implementation.

The present post of Director may be upgraded to rank of DDG (SR) and it should be a tennure post keeping in view the importance of JCM. The incumbent for the post should essentially have interest in staff relations.

Apart from the Departmental Committee and Regional Committees, efforts should be made to have more interaction with the staff side in the form of seminar on current issues and brain-storming sessions across the table to clear any mis-understanding. This will help in growth of cordial relation with the staff.

In fact, a Labour and Management Committee should be formed with representation from staff and higher officials on some permanent issues, like safety, corruption, productivity, welfare which could discuss the issues and monitor the decisions arrived at the Departmental and Regional Committees. It will be an effective instrument. The Committee should meet it least once in a month.

### **Workers Participation**

Workers Participation in management has been emphasized all over the world. Indian postal system adopted workers participation with the help of J.C.M. on the lines of U.K. That is worker's representative meet the management to mutually discuss and solve issues.

The J.C.M. is indirect method of workers participation in which only the unions representatives negotiate their demands with the management. This indirect approach has more political influence and does little to affect the sense of involvement and satisfaction of the employees in the organization. In such cases, only the leader are involved leaving passive and reactive role for the average employee.

This indirect approach may discuss the terms and condition of the worker but many important issues like output target, manning levels, methods, quality, standards, training, work organization and job contents are not discussed.

The work structuring has to be seen as functional task related, operating through the work management processes and of relevance to all employees by the direct method. The most important participation is in terms of employee's involvement in decision making process and its implementation.

As discussed earlier, the worker participation scheme has not been effective in the Department of Posts to a large extent. The new Scheme Work Improvement Team was floated by the Department in 1987 and being applied in Bombay (Annexure-XXVII, XXVIII). The team has discussed the problems in Bombay Head Post Office and MMS. PSD. The team suggested practical solution to the problems prevailing in these units. It is high time that this team should be given certain power and privileges. The management should make efforts to accord priority to implement the recommendations of the team in a specific period to ensure improvement in work practices.

The Department of Posts cannot discuss detail of personnel problems. Let J.C.M. discuss and find solution to the policy issues. The W.I.T. Teams should work at the operative level.

The management should enthuse competitive attitude to the team and introduce reward system to boost up the morale of employee in order to have more productivity/efficiency. The fact remains that the local problems are best known to local workers.

## **B - PRODUCTIVITY**

Generally, productivity and efficiency are synonymous. Studies have shown that both productivity and efficiency are interchangeable. The Department of Posts is measuring productivity through a formula based simply on averages (Annexure-XXIX). In the Department of Posts, productivity is dependent upon the traffic generated by the public. The more the use of postal services at the counter, the more the volume of traffic and more the work load. In actual sense, it is the postal services user which create scope for productivity in the postal system.

### **Work norms**

The Department has provided norms for almost all the operations for instance; there are Staff Inspection Unit norms for opening of post offices, Marathe Time Test norms for operative units, Madan Kishore Committee provides norms for administrative offices. Broad

norms have been laid for the P.S.D. but it does not give the detail of operation and the time allotted to it. There is no norms for stamp depots, MMS, RMS Group 'D'. Apart from this, manuals of the Department also provide detail of official duties.

The operative units more or less follow the revised work norms provided by MTT of 1951. The M.T.T. provided different time allowance for certain individual operations. The total work load of an office is assessed in terms of time on the above formula and justified staff sanctioned for the office. The time test formula ensures efficient services as well as the staff requirement. It is dynamic in character, reflect the working conditions of office as well as socio-economic conditions of the country. In the report on the Time Test, it was emphasised that Time Test is essentially based on averages. "If the minimum staff justified by the Time Test is made available in every post offices and the staff is well trained, occassional and seasonal shortage may be safely tide over."

There are norms for sorting offices based on traffic. These norms have been lowered over a period of time. The data shows that traffic is lesser even to meet the new sorting norms (Table 5.10, 5.11, 5.12.). It was observed that the employees finish their sorting work will before the specified period. Hence, no pendency of letters in sorting offices.

Table - 5.10  
Delhi RMS Sorting Workload  
during Dec. 88, April 89

Date	December 88	Jan.-89	Feb.89	March-89	Apr.89
1.	5,73,000	467000	475000	486000	399000
2.	5,12,500	588000	464000	463000	308000
3.	3,92,000	661000	463500	491000	451000
4.	3,28,000	668500	394500	396000	462000
5.	4,69,000	667500	352500	343000	478000
6.	4,50,500	640000	434000	456500	497000
7.	4,51,000	478000	462500	460000	478000
8.	4,48,000	372000	485000	507000	378000
9.	3,94,000	503000	459000	468000	295000
10.	3,89,000	494000	443000	465000	445000
11.	3,05,500	478500	360000	404000	445000
12.	4,64,000	503500	336000	339000	457000
13.	4,38,500	472000	418000	459500	508000
14.	4,48,000	344000	444500	464000	339500
15.	5,02,000	332000	471000	458000	365500
16.	4,59,000	436000	446500	445000	305000
17.	3,95,000	454000	470000	445000	435000
18.	3,23,000	484000	393000	388000	243000
19.	4,32,000	509500	346500	313000	465000
20.	4,52,000	497500	457000	441500	473000
21.	5,06,000	401000	544000	405000	501000
22.	5,31,000	332000	440000	184000	398000
23.	5,25,000	456000	445000	443000	345000
24.	4,86,000	464000	447000	250000	446000
25.	3,43,000	452000	405000	250000	446000
26.	5,77,000	254000	328000	300000	506000
27.	5,69,000	316000	466000	425000	461000
28.	5,62,000	359000	488000	461000	483000
29.	5,31,000	267000	-	449500	412000
30.	6,23,000	437000	-	521000	307000
31.	6,93,000	443000	-	481000	-
Total	1,45,75,000	1,42,32,000	1,21,59,500	1,29,92,500	1,24,35,500

Table 5.11

## CONSOLIDATION WORKLOAD

Month	Figures	
December	88 270	14575000
January	89 270	14232000
February	89 270	12159500
Marcha	89 270	12992500
April	89 270	12435500
		75124200

Table 5.12  
Staff Strength (RMS Delhi)

Regular	RTP	Total
Set I 30	11	
= 41		
Set II 21	11	
= 32		
Set III 17	-	
= 17		
-----		
Total 90		
-----		

## Work load per person

	Lower	Upper
Dec.88	3394.44	770000
Jan. 89	2822.22	7427.77
Feb. 89	3655.55	5422.22
Mar. 89	2777.77	5788.88
Apr. 89	3277.77	5644.44

Note: MTT Standard is 7000 letter for sorting per person according to sorting official.



The Productivity criteria should be base on idnividual performance, delays in delivery of mails to the public The Department may evolve transmission/delivery norms with time factor for individual articles to ensure efficiency/productivity followed by accountability. The individual efficiency/productivity should be based on the above norms and there should be povision of awards/incentives not only in terms of monetary benefits but social benefits like, more fare concessions, family outing, welfare, holidays, free time after finishing assigned jobs etc. A system could also be evolved where the officials could have self- assesment of their own performance.

### **Factors of Productivity**

The productivity factors of the Department of Posts can be devided into two broad categories: 1) The External factors; which includes the socio-economic and political conditions of the country, religion, caste and ethnic relations 2) the internal factors; which include a) organizational factors, b) rules, proceures and methods, c) facilities at work place d) machines and equipments, e) welfare facilities f) utilization of manpower and g) other aspects; which include, union's contribution, public cooperation.

### **Job Satisfaction**

The literature on Job satisfaction has shown that it is directly related to productivity. Attempt was made in the present study to know the job satisfaction of the postal worker. A checklist which contained 22 items on the different aspects of job satisfaction was provided to a number of officials to respond in the operative units in Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal. It was found that job satisfaction varied from place to place. In total, 44.60 per cent workers were found highly dissatisfied. The following table dipicts the responses.

Table - 5.13

## Job Satisfaction

Factors	UP (N=44)			DELHI (N=24)			W. BENGAL(N=42)		
	1*	2**	3***	1	2	3	1	2	3
Allotment of work	27	16	1	24	-	-	6	5	1
Opportunities of promotion	15	28	1	5	17	2	-	1	11
Working condition comfortable and healthful	16	24	4	6	18	-	3	9	-
Opportunities to present complaints and suggestion to higher authorities.	19	19	6	21	3	-	2	7	3
Faith in Management to do right things for employees	18	24	2	20	4	-	4	6	2
Welfare of Employees (general)	7	33	4	8	16	-	5	5	2
Leave requirement	36	7	1	22	1	1	9	3	-
Special Supervision	10	23	11	4	14	6	9	3	-
Chances for further trg.	18	24	2	3	11	10	7	3	2
Nature of job, interesting/challenging/.	27	16	1	1	17	6	8	4	-
Opportunities to communicate freely with superiors.	25	15	4	22	2	-	3	4	5
Perception of friends and relatives about job.	18	20	5	18	5	1	4	6	2
Department tactice to overdrive and get maximum	20	10	14	18	4	2	2	5	5
Can leave organization with same benefits to other organisation	20	15	2	88	10	6	6	6	-
Overall satisfaction about the present job	16	14	4	16	6	3	8	3	1

\* 1. Yes Agree Satisfied

\*\* 2. No Disagree Dissatisfied

\*\*\* 3. Donot know N.A.

Factors	1 <sup>*</sup>	2 <sup>**</sup>	3 <sup>***</sup>	1	2	3	1	23
Expectation of 1 Supervisor the present	21	17	6	17	3	4	1	10
Comparative earnings 4 Public and Private Sector	3	33	8	3	15	6	1	7
Chances of increasing 4 income	1	40	3	1	12	11	6	2
Can do better jobs than 5 the present in hand	25	17	2	15	5	4	1	6
Opportunity to enhance 5 skill on the job	18	21	5	12	9	3	1	6
Opportunity to apply trai- 3 ning skill for better productivity.	20	21	8	13	8	3	2	7
Total	399 (41.21)	469 (48.45)	100 (19.33)	269 (50.94)	191 (36.17)	68 (12.87)	93 (35.22)	125 46 (47.34) (17.42)
(Grand Total 1760)			43.23			44.60		12.15

The dissatisfaction factors were due to lack of;

- 1) Opportunity for promotion
- 2) Working conditions, comfortable and healthful.
- 3) Department, tactice to overdrive and get maximum
- 4) Chances to increase income
- 5) Can do better job than present in hand
- 6) Opportunity to enhance skill
- 7) Comparative earning private and public sector

The high satisfaction factors were mentioned as follows;

- 1) Leave requirement
- 2) Chances for further training

- 3) Expectation of Supervisor
- 4) Opportunity to communicate freely  
The respondents were further asked to enumerate the motivating factors for better work performance and their expectation from the job.

**The Motivating Factors in order of preference**

- 1) Security of Service
- 2) Good and Satisfactory Wages
- 3) Modern Equipments
- 4) Chances for advancement
- 5) Pleasant and healthful working conditions
- 6) Opportunity to succeed at what I am doing
- 7) Clear Organization goals
- 8) Challanging work
- 9) Feeling of doing something important
- 10) Effective supervision
- 11) Interesting work

**Expectation Factors of workers from the Job in Order of Preference**

- 1) Security of Service
- 2) Satisfactory and good salary
- 3) Promotion and growth
- 4) Tasteful discipline
- 5) Interesting work
- 6) Appreciation of work
- 7) Management loyalty of workers
- 8) Feeling of blongingness
- 9) Sympathtic understanding of personal problems
- 10) Good and healthful working conditions

The important factor that effects productivity is non- fulfilment of the factors of job satisfaction. An organization which has about 45 per cent dissatisfied persons can not run efficiently. Individuals are the most important constitutents of any organization and if they are not well looked after and made to work with the master-servant attitude, the heart burning of employees will reflect in their work process. In this regard, due credit should go the officials engaged in the operative units of the postal Department. The conditions

under which the operative staff is working need immediate attention.

The factors affecting productivity have been looked from the point of view of the important process of the postal operations like counter services, collection, transmission and delivery of mail. All these aspects of postal services are complementary to each other. Any disruption in this chain, causes delays.

### Counter Service

The counters Post Offices hold an important position because it generates traffic and directly deals with the public.

It was noticed during the visits to B.Os and S.Os that many post offices had no proper counters. The postal officials were using desk as counter. It is suggested that wherever the post offices are opened proper counter space should be provided.

The postal staff at the counter has to finish his job on the same day and at times faces difficulty in case of shortage of staff due to ban on recruitment and absenteeism. It is suggested that RTP should be made available keeping in view the shortage at post offices to meet the work pressure.

At the B.O. levels specially in rural areas, it was found that due to shortage of stationary (Registers) all the accounts are maintained in only one register.

The Department should apply Work Improvement Teams Scheme at the counter to improve the service. The finding and suggestions of the Team should receive priority attention.

The counter staff at times is not aware of the latest rules and procedures regarding postal operations. It should be made obligatory for the inspecting officer to apprise the latest information to the staff.

It was mentioned that the Department does not issue clear instructions. At times the guidelines for certain operations issued by the Department of posts are taken as instructions. It is suggested that the head of the department at appropriate level should give instructions/circular which are clear and understandable by the staff. It can be translated into regional language to avoid confusion and the guide-lines should be interpreted properly. It was mentioned by staff that important documents like manuals are not available for reference purposes. It is suggested that all the relevant documents, circulars should reach the concerned unit on time and be made available.

The Department of Postal introduced new schemes like speed post/speed MO to improve the services. It was mentioned that there was delay in sanctioning of staff and equipments. It is recommended that before launching a new scheme/service the department should properly assess staff requirement and the service should be provided with the trained staff to the postal outlets. The Department should develop mobile counters to make public more postal conscious.

### **Consumer's Satisfaction**

A consumer survey conducted by the Postal Excellence Committee (1987) shows dissatisfaction regarding delivery of mail. (Fig. 1,2) However, the main findings of the survey are as follows;

- (a) Quality of services offered by the postal have deteriorated over the period of time.
- (b) The Department should consolidate its services in urban areas rather than adding new offices. For the rural areas, the data supports for opening post offices with little or no consideration for economic viability.
- (c) A review of the consumers perception indicates that the maximum dissatisfaction was found for services like delivery of ordinary letters, newspapers, money orders etc.
- (d) Postal employees are not being properly trained in customer handling and do not have proper work attitude of helpfulness and patience which is lacking in their behaviour. Consumers bodies and advisory councils comprising employees and consumers can be constituted for better public relations and public grievance handling which would augment the present structure.
- (e) In general, the postal consumer is not much bothered about technology, and financing but is basically interested in quality of postal operations, speed, economy and reliability of services are important to him. While in the urban areas there is a persistent contrast the demands is for infrastructure that is complete and which works.
- (f) A very high percentage of the population would like the post office to provide them telegraph and P.C.O. services.

The dissatisfaction of the consumers include non-availability of stationary and forms unhelpful attitude of officials, cumbersome procedures and waiting time. (Annexure-XXX)

## Collection

### Letter Boxes

The collection of mail is done by the mail peon from the letter boxes installed in an area. It was found that the post boxes are not installed at a fixed distance. It is suggested proper norms could be fixed for installing letter boxes and their maintenance. The boxes are cleared once in a day in case of rural and thrice a day in urban areas. The jurisdiction of mail peon could be looked into, in order to reduce collection time so that the operations in the sorting unit may keep pace with the inflow of mail to keep the sorter busy. A survey of letter boxes could be undertaken in order to abandon unproductive letter boxes. The Department could think of multicoloured, multi-tier letter boxes in order to ease sorting.

The Inspector is supposed to look after the letter boxes. The jurisdiction of Inspector has to be looked into whether it is humanly possible for him to do justice to the job along with promotional chances and the facilities provided to him by the Department.

## Transmission

### Post Sorting Offices

The sorting is a very monotonous and mechanical job done by sorter and especially, in the night it is very tiresome. The sorter is prone to commit sorting mistakes. It is also common that at close of the day, letters could be dumped in a bag and sealed for any destination. This creates problem for receiving offices. In the sorting room, indiscipline prevails and due to which supervisor finds it difficult to control the staff. Union can play a vital role in bringing discipline.

A grave problem is faced due to bulk mail sent by private companies, Banks, L.I.C., publishers, Government Offices. The sorting is also hampered by letters not having proper addresses which increases work load of DLOs. This was found to be quite common in cases of Bank, LIC, Income Tax Departments. The Department of Posts should send circulars to dispatch letters with complete addresses.

It is recommended that the bulk mail owners, Government and non Government, should be requested to sort the mail at their offices and prepare bundles state-wise or district-wise in their own interest for speedy delivery. This will help the sorter to put the bundles in bags straight way. These institutions can also intimate the H.P.O./S.O. in advance about their bulk mail so that necessary arrangement could be made.



Once the bags have been prepared, they are reached to the RMS for onward transmission. The RMS people asserted if the preliminary sorting at the Post Offices is done properly, a lot of effort could be saved. A close supervision is needed for preliminary sorting at post offices. For in-comming mails the bags are received by the concentration/mail centres which are responsible for district offices under their jurisdiction. It was mentioned that the constarction centres mail offices do sorting for T.D. and other bags for rest of the districts are sent by available road/Rail route. It was mentioned told that one of the causes of delay of mail is the district sorting pattern. It suggested that the scheme should be look into afresh and to plug its loophole.

### **Motor Mail Service**

One of the most important unit in transmission of mail is MMS which forms the inner link of the postal service. This is the only carrier service owned and maintained by the Department.

The postal Motor Mail fleet has four whellers, three whellers which perform the work of transmission of mail. The vehicle are old, out dated as a result at times full fleet is not in operation due to breakdown non-availability of spares and other technical defects. Old vehicles could not be replaced due to procedural difficulties, paucity of funds, lack of on the spot decisions by manager, lack of technical personnel, conflict among the staff. The missing trips causes due to placement of vehicles, urbanization effects, like traffic jams and narrow lanes and break down of vehicles (Annexure-XXXI, XXXII).

It is, recommended that old and unserviceable vehicle may be replaced by new standard vehicle in phased manner. The Manager (MMS) could be given more financial powers to take on the spot decision regarding maintenance of fleet. Stores can be modernized and personnel managing the MMS need training in transport management including materials management and store keeping. It is worth considering use of computer for optimum utilization of the fleet allocation and inventory control.

A suitable reserve staff could be kept to counter absenteeism which is around 20%. There should be promotional avenues for MMS Managers, because it does not attract qualified engineers due low promotional prospects and quite a few leave the organization after gaining exprience. It is also recommended that public carrier vehicles should be asked to transport mail to the destination in case of breakdown of mail motors during the trip. There is wide scope for modernization of transport system, decentralization and expansion to cover rural and hill areas.

During the course of the discussion, it was mentioned that there is lack of interest on the part of the roadways staff and the private buses. The problem is more acute in the

The Department of Post could consider evolving the Postal Protection Force (PPF) on the lines of Railway Protection Force to guard postal installations, department, post offices, sorting offices, store depots, stamp depots, and accompany department cashier.

### **Railway Mail Service**

The condition of the RMS offices give a gloomy look, due to lack of maintenance of building and basic facilities like improper light, arrangement for exhaust fans, coolers, proper furniture, and maintenance of the pigeonholes.

It is therefore, recommended that the RMS offices at the Railway Station should be properly maintained, provided with required physical facilities, review of pigeonholes in consultation with sorter including sequential arrangements. Entry and exist points should be properly checked, the job rotation to be encouraged, provision of incentives and reward for efficiency in work proper recreation and rest rooms to be provided to counter tiredness of the workers.

The bags are prepared and kept half an hour before the arrival of train. Sometimes trains are late. Bags are brought to the station on a trolley by worker to compartment of the train for transfer of bags. The station has a number of platforms as such sometimes bags have to be transported physically by workers to the platform across the Railway track. It is dangerous to do such ventures. The Railways also do not give sufficient importance for proper loading of bags. It is recommended that mechanized trolleys can be used on the platform and conveyer belt could be used to transfer bags from one platforms to another. The railways may be requested to provide adequate importance to mail transportation.

Since, sorting on running trains have been abolished the railway provide ordinary compartments to RMS. At times, these compartment are three tier sleeper or ordinary compartment with low lights. It becomes difficult for the postal staff to arrange bags according to stations in route and also has lesser accommodation for staff to take rest during the night hours.

It is, recommended that the railways should be requested to construct long compartment with rack on both the side, space for name plates of the stations. It will ease the postal staff to arrange the bags properly. There should also be proper lighting arrangement to read tags of the bags. Two doors compartments should be used one for entry and another for exist to avoid crowding at one gate. The tag slip also should be printed in bold letters like the baggage tag in airlines.

Regarding district sorting pattern, (Annexure-XXIII) it was revealed that the employee in RMS are quite sore about it which is one of the important factors in delay of

Regarding district sorting pattern, (Annexure-XXIII) it was revealed that the employee in RMS are quite sore about it which is one of the important factors in delay of mails.

In case of Air transportation, it was revealed that the airlines do not take the specific load meant for destination. For instance, at Calcutta airport, it was told that the air staff do not accept the agreed payload for Andaman Islands as such some bags are left on the airport itself. It is recommended that the airlines should be requested to adhere to the agreed payload. The Department could provide Vayudoot service (on hire) for night lifting of mails for cosmopolitan and other metro towns, for speedy delivery.

### Delivery

The delivery aspect of postal service affects the image of the Department and has to be seriously looked into.

It was mentioned by the sorting staff that the size of letter envelop should be standardized and with specific mark for affixing stamp on the top right side. Those who use unstandard size envelop should be made to pay extra charges. The mistakes should also be checked and machines could be used in all H.P.O., mail offices to check undefaced stamps in order to check its further utilization. In cities like Delhi where the power breakdown is frequent, there should be stand-by power generator.

The postman delivers the mail to the public at their houses. Each SO marks area and the beat for postmen. The allocation of area was carved out when there was not so much increase in population. It is recommended that the area for delivery, beat of postman should be periodically reviewed.

It is a well known fact that the urbanization has increased due to creation of growth centres. A number of multistoreyed buildings, government, commercial buildings, new housing colonies and complexes have come up. The postman, finds it difficult to locate houses as such number of missent letters increase. The postman finds it difficult to deliver letters in case of multistoreyed buildings, leaving the articles on the road unguarded. It is recommended that the urbanization problem including listing of house number may be discussed and solved with the respective local authorities. Local authority should be requested to amend building bye-laws for construction of letter boxes at the ground floor.

The postmen also find difficulties in case of house nos., lane/street names, because the urban local bodies have not arranged the house numbers systematically. The SO can keep an up-to-date town list, and make the postman conversant with them at the time of beat training. The field supervisor has to keep a close watch on the action of postman

including non delivery of letters as a routine matter and contact periodically public to know the situation.

The Group 'D' could be trained at short intervals in order to improve their understanding. The necessary skills could be developed in the ED's with the help of mobile training unit at circle, Region and divisional levels.

### **Discipline**

It is generally noticed that the postal staff has become delinquent. They do not wear uniform, does not carry official mail bag. The postman should be provided with the at least two sets at uniforms, identity card, name badge, painted red cycle, so that the identify of postman could be maintained this will also boost up the sense of 'belongingness' to the Department. It is recommended that the matter of discipline of postman may be taken up with the union leaders and discussed across the table. A specially designed training programme could also inculcate the sense of 'belongingness' to the Department and make them feel morally high. An enlightened public can also help in this direction. The Department also should think in terms of evolving 'Re Brown' disciplines index which the railways applied. (Annexure-XXXIV)

### **Agency Work**

The Department of Posts has been doing agency work on behalf of the Ministry of Finance. These work include issuing of N.S.C., I.V.P., K.V.P., P.L.I., NSS., transact S.B. Account.

The accounts job is a specialized job. The Department of Posts should think of having an accounts cadre to perform the duties of savings bank. The staff attached could be trained in banking operations. The SB branch should work like banks and all the operations of banking system could be adopted for efficient working including the tallying of signature and identification of account holder, proper racks, bound registers with numbered pages to minimise corrupt practices.

The Department's instructions regarding the interest rates in the S.B. accounts should be clear so that the SB officials should follow them quickly. Modern equipments like calculator, adding machine should be provided to counter official.

The Department of Posts allows commission to agents for agency work to boost up collection. This practice has encouraged malpractice among the staff in collaboration with the agent. Its is suggested that staff dealing the NSC., NSS., etc., should be provided some commission to boost-up the sales. This will be a morale booster for the staff and work incentive to them.

The Department should take more agency work from Government department and private agencies such as collection of bills, taxes, to increase its income and finance the postal work and welfare aspects of its employee. The Department should also think of undertaking more and more advertisement jobs, hoardings etc., as it has excellent potentialities with its wide postal network and coverage.

### **Supporting units**

#### **Postal Store Depot**

The administration of the PSD Aligarh and Calcutta needs to be looked into. The environment is surcharged with tension and politics among the officials. The officials indulge in malpractices in delivery of material. The officials take the help of anti-social elements to take revenge from their colleagues. It is suggested that a senior officer of the rank of JTS should be posted to handle the affairs. The incumbent should have interest in stores with materials management training to run the administration and take on the spot decisions for effective implementation.

The personnel working in PSD needs training dealing with forms, press matters because the technical queries from the press are not properly replied. The forms could be simplified and multipurpose forms could be evolved by the Department. It should also take into consideration the recommendations of Form Committee 1957.

It is recommended that there should be inter-PSD transfers so that change in environment could help the PSD to have better discipline and less of domestic politics.

The PSD receives indent in piecemeal as such it finds it difficult to dispatch the consignment in time. It is suggested that the respective divisions should consolidate indents regarding stores and send them to PSD for dispatch and disburse them in the divisional offices. (Annexure-XXXV). While discussing with the PSD officer it was revealed that there is lack of standardised indent forms for HPO, SO, and BO. It is suggested that the Directorate should take step to standardise indent forms and the format should be supplied to all the client units of PSD.

It was also revealed that there is shortage of essential and non essential forms at the P.S.D. It is suggested that a Committee should look into the shortage of forms and recommend in order to improve the situation. The printing of non essential form could be done at the local level in case of emergency. In PSD all the units prepare bundles against the indent and supply them separately. It is suggested that the supply should be centralized and the PSD should have a separate supply section which should look after proper and timely supply. The buildings of the PSD gives a very gloomy picture. Old and dilapidated

building with no maintenance has a hazard for officials. This can be done by providing proper repairs and maintenance at least once in three year. The fire fighting equipments,

hydrants, pest control aspects are quite important for PSD as such these equipments need to be provided.

There is wide scope for codification, classification and computernization in the PSD for improving efficiency.

### **Printing Press**

The Department now owns a printing press and also depend upon Government press for printing of stationery. While talking with the official in the press (Aligarh) it was revealed that the press does not have norms for printing work. The technical quaries are not properly attended to. In case of clearifications, PSD refers it to the Directorate. The officials dealing with press matters are not trained and no time bound reply schedule is followed. The press official said that due to shortage of funds, postal forms could not be printed in time.

### **Stamp Depot**

The Calcutta stamp depot is housed in a rented building. The building is in bad shape. The depot should have a senior HSG I officer to look after the administrative arrangements. It is high time that the department should have a new building with all facilities for storing stamps and other material. The official revealed at that consignment sent by Nasik is frequently delayed. Many a times, the invoice comes earlier than the consignment. It was suggested that the consignment should be sent though parcel post in order to avoid delay by the railways. The manpower requirement also needs review. Provision should also be made for inter-stamp depot transfers. The higher officials should also inspect the depot frequently to solve the local problems.

### **Cooperative Society (Seal)**

The Aligarh seal Society started as a society was registered under the Cooperative Society's Act during early fifties. The Society prepares seal for the postal Department and it is located within the premises of PSD Aligarh. The society work on the basis of contract signed with the Department to supply seal.

During the course of the discussion, it was found that the Department has last contract signed in 1985. Under the contract the Department has to place order for a specified member of seal to the Society. The members of the Society feel that the full quota of order under the contract is not provided to the Society as a result members are not getting fully engaged in manufacturing of seal. (Annexure-XXVI)

The seal after its completion is supposed to be checked by P.S.D. official. There is undue delay in approving the seal and it was alleged that the concerned official indulge in corrupt practices. A joint inspection by Society and postal official will be a better proposition to check malpractices. The Society members also disclosed that after approval of seal, the payment is delayed by the Department. It is suggested that a system could be evolved to supply seal by V.P.P. directly to the operating units in order to avoid delay. The rate list for different seal is approved by the Department at an agreed interval. Members mentioned that the rate not has not been revised for a long time keeping in view the raising cost of material. It is suggested that the rate list be revised regularly once in three years. The Cooperative Society also supplies seal to the neighbouring countries on approved rates. This contract is discussed with the representatives of neighbouring countries and the Department takes decision about the rates etc., on behalf of the Society. It is suggested that the representative of the Society should also be consulted while discussing the contract with neighbouring countries in order to protect the Society's interest.

The Society is performing its job with the help of skilled labour with hand method. This takes lot of time to prepare a seal. It is suggested that Department of Posts should advance money to the Society to purchase machines and equipments to modernise manufacturing for better output to meet therequirement of post offices. This will also help the Society to counter losses. The funds could be adjusted against the supply of seal to the Department. It was observed that there is lot of factional politics prevails in the Society which affects the work and supply position. There was an attempt by the Department to take over the Society but nothing had been done so far. Efforts should be made to change the character of the society after mutual discussion with the workers.

### **Staff Grievances**

Although, there is provision of J.C.M. and redressal of staff grievances in the Department. To speed up and decide the day-to- day staff grievances on petty matters like leave, bills and other local problems. A senior official with administrative and financial powers could visit the operating unit for few hours in a week to take on the spot decision, without waiting for higher authorities.

There exist strict departmental action against frauds and losses under the rule 14 and 16 of the Postal Manual. It has an adverse effect on the morale of the employees. There is provision of disposing of such cases in 120 days. However, the cases take 2-3 year to get settled. It is recommended that the time limit of 120 days as prescribed, should be strictly adhered and for this purpose seperate inquiry officer be appointed to speed up the process.



### **Welfare Schemes**

The Department of Posts can implement welfare scheme like housing. It was revealed from the minutes of J.C.M. that employees are not satisfied with the medical facilities. The Department should endeavour to improve the medical facilities on the lines provided by railways to treat their employees. The department could also think of starting creches for children of working mothers. The Department should also think of providing transport to its employees for attending office and back home on payment in the metropolitan towns.

The Department should also think of welfare schemes for employees families like facilities to transfers (transit homes) excursion tours, holiday homes etc. The Department could also develop sports and persons with sports background could be given due weightage in recruitment.

### **Public Relation**

The Department has a very weak public relation network. The postal services are essentially consumer oriented as such the department should have strong public relation structure at the levels.

Normally, the public does not register grievances in the complaint book available at the post offices. The department should have more arrangement for open public redressal sessions at H.P.O. and lower levels. Senior officials should listen public grievances at least once in a month. The decision should be promptly implemented. The notice for the session could appear in local newspapers, Radio/Television for information to the public.

### **Public Cooperation in Postal Services**

The public has to take a positive role in improving the postal because they are the user of services. The enlightened public do write in newspapers columns about the shortcomings of the postal Department from time to time. However, some of the suggestions which have emerged after discussion with the officials are as under:

- The public should be informed to cooperate and send the letters with complete and correct addressed.
- The stamps should be fixed a proper place.
- Vigilant public should inform the higher officials if there is indiscipline and lapses on the part of the postal staff.

The Department should develop programme for media to educate the public about the postal systems and to seek their cooperation.

### Criteria for Programme Efficiency

The present system in Department of Post is not congenial for efficient working due to its policies ingoring the interest of workers. The nature of job is mechanical and routine. The present system of the Department of Posts can improved to a great extlent if the welfare aspects in the work place and its workers are thoughtfully considered and improved.

The Department of Posts should define its policy keeping in view the welfare aspects. There should be perspective planning and the targets should be redefined. The middle management needs to be trained in leadership techniques for better performance and taking up leadership role.

### Chart - I Work System

#### External Invironment\*

Regionalism,Caste  
ethenic relations,  
religion and politics

Individual system	Support system
Educational level	Right, Clear cut
> value cultural	> Policy and
work honesty	> Productivity
Individualskill	Research
group efforts	(R&D)
human behaviour	Incentivs,
Environment(work)	Recognition
work culture	Award
job satisfaction	

The Department has to conduct long surveys keeping view the wide socio-econoic conditions, swelling population and geographical variations. The findings of such surveys have to be implemented in the right spirit.

There is more hierarchy of authority, impersonal, formal and mechanical with minimum of role interaction among the officials. The attitude and behaviour could be made better and this could be done with the help of reorienting and structuring training programmes for better motivation.

There should be;

recognition of good work; opportunities for advancement; grievance handling; getting opportunities for implementation of ideas; consultation with employees; adequacy of need based training; sympathetic and personnel touch in attitude of colleagues; opportunities of promotion; use of skills.

The Department should create Research and Development cell/study cell which should have opinion survey on creative handling of work and to assess the quality of processes existing and to develop material for dissemination of information.

It is recommended that special committee may be appointed to look into the working of present pattern of R&D and find ways and means to improve upon for more creative work for the Department.

These development programmes of postal services should be time bound keeping in view the satisfaction to render economic, reliable and efficient services.

## SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

### Postal Operation

- In view of the socio-economic development, urbanization, spread of education and the likely techno-managerial changes, postal operations in India will be called upon to play a greater role than what it had played in the recent past.
- The Postal operations are no longer only social or public utility service; most of its operations are commercial in nature.
- It is being strongly advocated that in the next few years the Department of Posts should not only expand its activities but should become a commercial, viable and financially self-sufficient organization.

### Organisation Structure at Headquarters

- Owing to a number of administrative and financial restrictions, the Department of Posts has not been able to run its activities efficiently. Such restrictions are also not conducive to undertake commercial ventures or approach organizational matters with greater initiative, drive and enterprise.
- Though there are number of forms of organization for the administration of postal activities, each achieving a different balance between the objective of autonomy and control, the requisite autonomy cannot be secured only by legal status.
- There is indeed no discoverable co-relation between the legal status of the organization and its autonomy and the quality of performance.
- Only administrative and procedural modifications within the existing framework are needed to achieve excellence in the postal services.
- For managing the gigantic and diverse activities of Postal Services, it is essential to have a Postal Services Board consisting of a team of competent persons.
- Apart from the full-time Member, for a wider interaction with the concerned and interest groups, it is essential to associate outsiders, on part-time basis, in the policy making of the postal operations.
- The Policy-Directing Board should consist of twenty part-time Members.
- On the one hand it should have representatives from the concerned Ministries, preferably at the level of Secretary/Addl. Secretary and on the

other hand representatives of industries, universities and other bulk users of postal services alongwith economist and management experts.

- The work between the full-time Members should be divided on functional basis; like personnel, finance, operation, development and commercial. All the Members have equal status except that the Chairman should be given the right to preside and coordinate the activities of the Members.
- The status of all the Members should be raised to that of the Secretary to the Government of India and the Board should have all the powers of the Government within the given budgetary, parliamentary accountability, control by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India and other such bodies.
- Once the status of the Board and those of its Members is raised, through suitable legal arrangements, many of the administrative and financial problems would largely be solved.
- All the full-time Members should be given enhanced powers in their specific areas of responsibility and they should be assisted by a small group of experts.
- The Policy-Directing Board should meet as frequently as desirable but not later than once in three months.
- The full-time functional Members should meet atleast once in a fortnight.
- The secretariat attached to the Board should be kept at the minimum by decentralization and shedding some of the functions from the Headquarters.
- Some experts other than those belonging to Indian Postal Service should also be brought into the Directorate.
- For the operational and developmental activities more field staff should be brought on tenure basis.
- The Directorate work should be rationalised and strengthened in the emerging area of activities.
- All staff matters should be brought under Member (Personnel).
- The training and R&D activities alongwith Staff Training College should be brought under the charge of Deputy Director General (Trg.)

### The Field Set-Up

- Normally every revenue district be provided with a minimum of one Head Post Office. Additional Head Post Offices in the district should be provided on the basis of norms which are quantifiable and are based on rational parameters for accurately measuring the work relating to the functions of a Head Post Office.
- The norms governing the status of the Head Postmaster be formulate in a matter so that they afford proper weightage to the responsibilities generated by the work relating to the transactions of the subordinate sub-offices/branch offices as well as that of the Head Post Office itself.
- Every revenue district be constituted into a separate and undivisible postal division with the jurisdiction coterminous with that of the district.
- That status of a head of the postal division be governed by the norms based on the 'total annual cash receipts' of the division. Postal division be headed by a JTS/STS/JAG/SAG level officers depending on the above norms according to their status. The divisional incumbents, should exercise the administrative and financial powers according to their status in the operational areas.
- Sorting work be totally abolished from the RMS and merged with the postal branch.
- The RMS should be for the purpose of transmission of mail. The RMS be renamed as Mail Transmission Service (MTS).
- The jurisdiction of proposed MTS division be coterminous with that of a Railway Division.
- All the proposed MTS divisions be uniformly placed under the change of Senior Time Scale Group 'A' Officers.
- The proposed MTS divisions may report to Directors (MTS) located at the Railway Zone Headquarters.
- The Director (MTS) may perform the functions and shoulder the responsibilities in respect of RMS divisions within his jurisdiction presently performed by the Head of the Circles.
- The posts of General Manager (MTS) in SAG may be created at Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi and Madras to control and coordinate the work of the proposed Directors (MTS) and the MTS divisions.

## Personnel Policies

### Recruitment

- Standards of recruitment at the base of the employment ladder i.e, ED level should be improved, and special efforts should be made to attract educationally better qualified persons for all ED posts.
- Minimum qualification for group D should be VIII Standard which may be relaxed by the competent authority in cases of compassionate appointment, 50% of group D vacancies in each recruiting unit should be filled on pure merit in a competitive test open to all eligible EDA's and the other 50% on the basis of length of service and minimum qualifying marks is the test which should be of a higher standard than at present.
- The examination for recruitment to the Postmen's cadre for both the departmental quota of vacancies and the direct recruitment quota should be of a higher standard and it should be competitive and not just qualifying.
- There should be a common test for both departmental candidates with minimum educational qualification of X-pass and outsiders with minimum educational qualification of XII pass. The test should be designed and conducted by the Staff Selection Commission, The Department should provide opportunities and facilities to the departmental employees to improve their departmental knowledge with specially prepared audio-cassettes and training handbooks to be available from the Postal Training Centre and their educational qualification by offering incentives and suitable facilities. The recruitment in this cadre should be against posts instead of vacancies as at present.
- The Department should take steps to make the Inspectors' examination more attractive by improving the pay scales and simultaneously introducing direct recruitment to the cadre to the extent of 25% vacancies and also by providing adequate number of cadre posts and promotional posts through cadre reviews. Age relaxation upto 35 per cent may be given to the departmental candidates to compete for the direct recruitment quota.
- Recruitment to the Indian Postal Service Group A should be in the ratio of 50% posts by direct recruitment and 50% posts by promotion from Group B Officers of the Department. The departmental promotion should be to the senior time scale of the service.
- Some LSG posts with higher responsibilities and challenges should be identified and recruitment to these should be through a limited competitive examination open to

departmental candidates to provide an incentive for brilliant young Assistants (age limit 35 years).

- The pattern of examination for general line officials for promotion to posts in Group B against the quota reserved for them should be reviewed in consultation with the UPSC/SSC keeping in view the managerial responsibilities of the higher posts. The Department may organise coaching classes and supply coaching materials for those taking the examination.
- In order to provide a fast channel of promotion to bright and promising Assistants and a measure of inducement to retain them in the service of the Department, a certain percentage of posts in Group B should be filled up by a competitive examination open to such Assistants with the lower age limit. The proportion of vacancies in Group B may be redistributed in consultation with the Staff Unions/Associations to provide for 90% vacancies for Inspectors' line according to the existing system, 5% vacancies for the general line selection grade officers under the scheme agreed between the Department and the Staff Unions and 5% vacancies through the proposed competitive examination for Assistants up to the age limit of 35 years.

### Training

- Outlay for training should be increased to atleast 1% of the wage bill.
- The Department of Posts should have a perspective training plan for the Department with sub-plans to be administered by cadre controlling units like the Directorate, the Circle Office and the Divisional Office, and each of these units should have a Training Officer/Training Inspector.
- The Postal Staff College should shift to its campus at Ghaziabad while retaining a small establishment in Dak Bhavan for seminars and special programmes so that it has proper infrastructure facilities.
- The Research and Development centre should be located in the campus or Postal Staff College.
- The Postal Staff College should take on induction training and in-service training of those promoted to Group B, officers promoted from Group B to A and also Accounts Officers of the Postal Wing.
- The leadership and technical guidance role in training in respect of postal training Centres envisaged in the original chartered of responsibilities of the Postal staff College should be restored to it and all the training institutions of the Department



should have a single line for mutual consultation and co-ordination among themselves.

- The duration of training of Assistants should be increased from 2 1/2 months to 3 months at the PTC's, The training schedule should be reviewed to provide for the requirements of three different types of recruits, and new technologies and developments in postal operations and some additional areas,
- The Instructor trainee ratio should be 1: 20.
- Practical training after the institutional training should be made more systematic and meaningful and effective.
- Post-training test should be after the practical training.
- Induction Training for LSG Officials should be made compulsory before assumption of higher responsibility. The period of training should be increased to 3 weeks to cover additional subjects like human-relations basic principles of management, public relations, communication and complaint handling, layout planning and so on.
- The training period for Inspectors should also be increased to 3 weeks with suitable strengthening of contents to cover principles of management, communication, decision-making, delegation, public relations, report writing and law.
- Refresher courses for Postal Assistants should be geared to the different possible field situations and in the refresher courses for Inspectors, more attention should be paid to subjects like inspection techniques, disciplinary proceedings, work analysis and marketing, human relations and knowledge of machines used in the Post Offices. There is need for more such courses to cover more people.
- There should be a regular training programme for Public Relations Inspectors who should undergo one week's induction training before posting.
- Distance learning modules for all the uncovered categories of employees like Divisional Office Staff and Accounts Staff of Head Post Offices and RMS record offices Postal Store Depots and Central Stamp Depots, Postmen and Mail Overseers, mailguards and EDBPM's/EDSPM's and EDDA's should be prepared by the PTC's. It would be preferable if Postmen, Mail Overseers can be given institutional training and if EDBPMs/EDSPM's are given training at some nearby Departmental Post office by an Inspector if it possible, they should undergo distance learning modules under proper guidance. The PTC's should also develop self-learning packages and audio-cassettes in different areas as supplements to institutional and regular training. They should be in local language for assistants and below.

- Training Faculty should be carefully selected and developed by training, exposure to seminars, workshops and encouragement to broaden their academic interests. The Faculty should be drawn from all branches of the Department. The period of retention should be 5 to 6 years.
- A formal channel of interaction between the training institution and the field formations units should be established and with the help of training officers, at different levels, continuing education should be ensured through a mix of institutional training, distance learning, and on the job training.
- The Department should develop a mechanism through these training officers for on-the-spot and brief interventions, to solve specific problems in specific offices.
- The training programmes at the training institutions should be reviewed to provide for items which encourage participation in decision-making, building up of mutual trust among different levels of employees with a view to developing among the employees self-esteem and pride in the service.
- There should be continuing evaluation and monitoring of the training effort and its impact on the employees and on the quality of service.

#### **Placement/Transfer Policies**

- Implementation of tenure transfers and rotational transfer policies should be ensured and first posting of direct recruits and promoted officers should be away from the home State. In case of direct recruits, there should be planned rotation through different types of charges.
- Person, trained in specific areas should be posted in those areas so that the training is meaningfully utilised.
- There should be greater openness and taking of officials into confidence in placement plans of the Department which should take into consideration their individual career development plans, their interests, areas of their specialisation and needs of the Department.

#### **Human Resource Development**

The Department should have a well defined personnel policy with clear objectives. Within the framework of this policy and its objectives, the Department should give special attention to the following:-

- Organise well-staffed personnel units in the offices of Cadre Controlling authorities. Personnel manning these units should be trained in Personnel Management.

- Provide for integrated Manpower Planning for the whole corpus of postal workforce with cadre management sub-plans for each cadre in their interrelationship, taking into account promotion cadres outside and so on, with periodical reviews. All categories of staff should get their first promotion in around 16 years of service and second promotion after about 28 years of service as a result of periodical cadre reviews.
- Build up specialisation in different areas as a measure of developing greater professionalism in the service.
- Take steps to improve working environment by job enrichment, provision of basic amenities, more participative style of working and more informal interaction and by strengthening family feelings different categories of employees, highlighting contributions and merit and performance and building up rewards system.
- Revamp the ACR System to make it a tool for optimisation of the Department and its employees and an instrument of efficiency audit and deficiency correction. It should be made as open as possible. The Reporting Officers should be passed through a Training workshop in appraisal report writing.
- The top Management should set an example of team spirit, pride service and enthusiasm for efficiency of the service and welfare of the Staff.

### Management Relations and Productivity

There is a need to amendment of the Act and put restriction on membership to curb the multiplicity of unions in the Department. The criteria could vary between 35 and 45 per cent membership for recognition of unions.

The Department of Posts should involve unions to improve efficiency and identify areas where the postal service can be improved with the help of unions.

The Department should give developmental role to the unions and give its employees facilities in this regard.

The Union Journal could carry column in which development programmes alongwith an appeal to the workers to improve the postal service could be published.

Union felt IPS probationers should be first posted in operational units and thereafter there services be shifted to policy levels.

To improve the working of the Department and its image the unions should be consulted at appropriate levels. There should be change in out look of those in authority at different levels. There is lack of professionalism among the union leaders and other office bearers. There is a need for training them in union activities.

The Department should consider that the unions are part of the Department. The Department should give them importance and make them equal partner in the departmental affairs.

There should be proper flow of information to unions alongwith periodical meetings.

The Department, Circle/Regional Committee could be used for mutual discussions of the problems. The attitude should be sympathetic, sporting and in cordial atmosphere.

The Department Committee should have representation of the federation on the basis of membership distributed on a mutually accepted formula. Effort should be made to get representation of Extra Departmental Agents in the J.C.M. and Unions having all India character.

The strength of retired persons in the Departmental Committee should be gradually reduced to keep a balance between retired and in-service employees.

The Departmental as well as Regional Committees should meet as per the constitutional requirements of the J.C.M.

A committee consisting of staff as well as officials could decide, scrutinise items of agenda, in terms of quality, time constraint for Departmental and Regional Committee Meetings.

All the federation and non federated unions of All India character should meet once a month to monitor implementation.

Due care should be taken to choose issues for arbitration in consultation with the staff side. A committee consisting of staff and officials could also look into the issues. There should be as qualified legal advisor/consultants to represent the Department in case of arbitration.

The DDG of the concerned Unit should be made responsible for time-bound implementation of decisions of Departmental Committee. It should be followed with "feed back" and accountability. Director at Circle, Regional, SSP at Divisional level should be made responsible for speedy implementation. They should have more interaction with the staff side in the form of seminar, meetings on the concerned issues. A labour and management committee should be formed with representation from staff and officials sides for discussing issues like safety, corruption, productivity, welfare and monitor the implementation of decisions.

The W.I.T. Team's recommendations should receive priority attention. The management should enthuse competitive attitude to the team.

Attitudinal change of work is require for review, keeping in view the human element involved in the work process. If the postal services have to be made more wide and productivity the employees should be made more public conscious with prompt and courteous service.

The productivity norms should be based on delay in delivery of mails.

The foremost important factor that effects productivity in non-fulfilment of the factors effecting job satisfaction. An organization which has 44.6 per cent dissatisfied persons can not run efficiently.

There should be close supervision and control at operating units and provision of uniform facilities and training of staff.

The bulk mail owners, Government and non-government agencies should be requested to sort the mail at their own offices and Departments to send circulars for writing complete address to these agencies.

The old unserviceable vehicle may be replaced by new standard vehicles in phased manner, financial powers for manager Stores can be modernised, the personnel managing the MMS need training in transport management, materials management and store keeping, use of computers for optimum utilization of the fleet allocation and inventory control.

Mechanized trollys and conveyer belt can be used on the platform. The railways may be requested to provide adequate importance to mail compartments with facilities be provided.

The airlines should be requested to adhere to the agreed payload. The Department could provide vayudoot service for night lifting of mails. The bus staff could be considered for monetary incentive. The Department of Posts could consider evolving the Postal Protection Force (PPF) to guard postal unit and instalations.

The size of letter envelop should be standardized and there should be specific mark for affixing stamps, standarization concept in purchase of mechines could be used. The area of the SO and delivery beat should be reviewed. Job rotation between sorter and postman may be considered. Field supervisor should keep a watch on the actions of postman.

The Department also should think in terms of evolving 're brown' disciline index for postal staff and discuss with union.

It is suggested that the post offices should have proper counter appropriate steps to counter work pressure to be taken.

It is suggested that a device could be developed to modernize stamping issue should clear instrinctions. It is suggested that the Head of the Department at appropriate level should give clear instructions/circular. For newer schemes, proper assessment and trained staff is required.

A high powered official could be placed at the disposal of operating units with financial and administrative powers to take on the spot decisions for redressal of day-to-day grievances.

Departmental action against fraud and loss should be strictly and the adhere to, seperate Inquiry Officer to deal with the such cases.

A senior official with training in stores and materials managements to run the administration of PSD. The personnel working in PSD needs training and inter PSD transfers for better environment and discipline. PSD building to be properly maintained, modernization of working of PSD. It is suggested that proper training may be accorded to official handling press matters.

A senior official to man the stamp depot. The depot should have proper manpower requirement and provision should be for inter-depot transfers. It was suggested that the consignment should be sent by V.P.P. Cooperative Society's Rate list needs revision, full agree quota to be released, modernization of cooperative society and supervision is needed to streamline administration.

Efforts may be made to improve the medical facilities, providing transport to its employees and family welfare schemes.

The Department should have strong public relation at Directorate, circle and division levels for mass contact through media, provision for open public redressal sessions at H.P.O. and below levels and steps to seek public.

The Department of Post can improved to a great extent if the welfare aspects in the work place and its workers are thoughtfully considered and improved.

The Department of Posts should design its policy keeping in view the welfare aspect. There should be perspective planning and the targets should be redefined.

The role has to be more challenging with appropriate work leadership in order to face new challenges.

A team work has to be developed, the members themselves work for solution to this problems.

The norms should have also a human element of fatigue keeping in view the monotonous type of work. MTT needs revision.

All the related units should have the time test in order to maintain quality and uniformity.

The Department should conduct surveys keeping view the wide socio-economic conditions, swelling population and geographical variations. The findings of such surveys have to be implemented in the right spirit.

There should be recognition of good work; opportunities for advancement; grievance handling; getting opportunities for implementation of ideas; consultation with employees; adequacy of need based training; sympathetic and personnel touch in attitude of colleagues; opportunities of promotion; use of skills;

The Department should create Research and Development cell/study cell which should have opinion surveyed on creative handling of work and to assess the quality of processes existing now and to develop material for dissemination of information. Special committee may be appointed to look into the working of R&D.